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THE SCARLET HAND;

OR, THE ORPHAN HEIRESS OF FIFTH AVENUE.

NEW YORK HEARTHS AND NEW YORK HOMES.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

Author of "The Ace of Spades," "The Witches of New York," Etc.

CHAPTER I.

BROADWAY AT NINE O' THE NIGHT.

A CLEAR, calm evening in the month of March, in the year of our Lord, 1870.

In a doorway on Broadway, near the corner of Leonard street, sat a man. The bells had just rung out nine on the night-air, and the great highway, below Canal street, was almost deserted.

The man, who sat shivering—for the night-air was chill, and cut him to the bone—in the doorway, was thin and shabbily clad in a rusty black suit, worn threadbare, the white seams carefully stained black with ink, as if the wearer desired to conceal his poverty and appear as much like a gentleman as possible. A crushed and battered hat was adjusted carefully upon his head, in what he evidently conceived to be a rakish and jaunty fashion. A pair of wretched boots, that hardly kept his feet from the cold pavements, completed his dress.

The frock coat, buttoned tightly to the throat, told of the absence of clean linen; while his pale, thin face showed want and misery as plainly as his shabby dress.

One would have judged the man to have been thirty-five or forty years old.

That pallid face would have excited attention even in a crowd. Singularly white in hue, it yet gleamed with a rare intelligence, and was framed, as it were, by jet-black curls, hanging down in little straggling ringlets. A thin mustache and imperial adorned the upper lip and chin. A pair of great gray eyes, that looked black a dozen paces off—eyes that now shone like balls of fire so wildly did they gleam—were windows to a soul of rare inspiration, whose owner looked like a gentleman despite the seedy dress and rough, unshaven face; but the lines about the handsome mouth—the weak, wavering lines—spoke plainly of an irresolute will.

The man was a wreck—a temporary wreck both physically and mentally. The heaven-gifted genius that should have led him on to fame had proved his ruin.

The name by which the world knew him was Edmund Mordaunt. By profession an actor, he had achieved the laurel wreath and had been deemed worthy to wear the mantle of Kemble or Kean. But prosperity and friends were too much for him. He yielded to the siren of Drink; the Spirit of Wine had touched his veins with its fatal fire. Step by step he went down the social ladder, until at last he found himself an outcast and beggar! Vainly had scheming caterers for the public—anxious to secure the dollars that his genius was sure to attract—tried to keep him from the cup that had proved his ruin. All efforts resulted in failure, and one by one friends deserted the inebriate and left him to wallow in the mire where their hands had helped to place him.

So that on that chill March night Edmund Mordaunt found himself sitting on Broadway, shivering in the cold, and without a single penny in the world wherewith to appease hunger and thirst. Food had not

passed his lips for four and twenty hours. Vainly he had sought his former applauding friends, who, when his handsome, manly figure graced the boards of the theater, and the wondrous poetry of Avon's Bard came in liquid music from his lips, were wild in their enthusiasm, but turned in disgust from the thin-faced and sunken-eyed beggar who prayed for food. It is the way of the world.

"Poor Tom's a-cold!" muttered the shivering man, folding his arms tightly around his body as though to impart warmth by the action. "I wonder where I'm going to sleep to-night? To die—to sleep; perchance to dream," and a deep sigh came from the weary soul of the wretched outcast.

"Will anybody give me ten cents to save my life?" he cried, suddenly, extending his arms as if addressing an audience. "Oh, my head feels queer," he muttered, with a half-groan, letting his head fall upon his bosom. Then he passed his hand, nervously, across his brow. "Ah! I wonder if I'm going to have the tremors again? I don't see any snakes, but I feel sick—sick. Ay, sick of life!"

"Life!" cried the wreck, with a bitter, cynical cough, that rung out shrilly on the night-air. "It isn't life—it's living death to him who has the demon of drink ever at his side. Drink—drink—give me drink!" he cried, in tones full of the pathos of despair. "Oh, God, deliver me from this curse!" he wailed, his thin white hands held pleading up to heaven. "To-night I condescended to beg from a stranger, and was spurned as a 'drunken brute.' He was a nice, black, curly-haired chap, though dressed like a coal-heaver. I'll never forget his face as long as I live. A handsome fellow, but a devil. I'll swear it by his eyes—those windows to the soul. Oh! I'd give any thing for food and a drink."

"I'm burning up inside; this thirst is killing me. I could swallow liquid fire. Oh! my head!"

The footsteps of a man coming down Broadway fell upon the ears of the miserable creature. "Here comes somebody," he muttered; "shall I try once more? It's only a refusal, and I've fallen so low that my pride ought to be all gone now. Yes, I'll try. I must have liquor or I shall go mad."

Mordaunt rose to his feet, but staggered from weakness, and but for the friendly support of the wall would have fallen.

"I'm about done for. I shall 'pass in my checks' soon," he muttered, with a ghastly attempt at a smile. "It's a young man," he continued, as the stranger came in sight; "perhaps there'll be some spark of pity in his heart. 'One touch of nature makes all the world akin.'"

Then the wreck advanced and met the stranger.

"I beg your pardon, sir, for accosting you in this manner," said the outcast, touching his hat with graceful politeness; "but I am in want—in great want. Can you oblige me with a loan? If it's only ten cents, sir, I shall be grateful."

The stranger paused. The rays of the gas-

light fell full upon the features of Mordaunt, while the other's were in the shade.

For a moment the new-comer gazed into the face of the beggar. The pale, wan features proved that the wretched man had spoken truly.

"You are really suffering?" asked the stranger.

Mordaunt could not repress a start. The voice was strangely familiar to him. Where had he heard it before?

"Yes, sir," the actor said. "I am indeed in want or I should not ask you, a stranger, for assistance. I believe you are a stranger to me, sir, although your voice sounds familiar to me."

"I am sure that I have never met you before, for I seldom forget a face," rejoined the other.

"Strange," said Mordaunt, with a puzzled shake of the head. "I can almost swear that I've heard your voice before. My ear used to be excellent before liquor used me up. The simple words told the history of a wasted life."

"I can see by your manner, sir, that you are a gentleman," said the young man in his clear, frank voice. "I feel an inclination to aid you, although you are a stranger to me. Here's a five-dollar bill," and the young man took the "greenback" from his pocket-book, together with a card. "And this is my card. If you will call at my residence, No. 268 Fifth avenue, to-morrow, I'll see what I can do for you further."

Then the stranger gave the bill and card into the trembling hands of the wreck; and as he did so stepped forward, so that the gaslight shone upon his face.

Mordaunt gazed with wonder upon the countenance of the donor, while mechanically his hand grasped the bill and the card. There was nothing in the face to excite wonder. It was that of a young man of three and twenty—a handsome face; the hair dark brown, curling tightly to the head; the eyes dark-blue, almost black. The features were regular; the skin of an olive tinge.

Yet Mordaunt gazed at the young man as though a specter stood before him. "Heavens!" he cried, in astonishment not unmixed with dismay. "Yes, I'll try. I must have liquor or I shall go mad."

Mordaunt rose to his feet, but staggered from weakness, and but for the friendly support of the wall would have fallen.

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The stranger paused. The rays of the gas-

"this man had your very movements, even. Can I have dreamed all this? Are my brains all burnt up by liquor?"

"It is possibly your fancy," said the young man. "What is your name?"

"Edward Mordaunt."

"I shall remember. By the way, isn't this Leonard street here?" and the stranger pointed to the corner.

"Yes."

"How many streets down to Baxter?"

"Baxter is the third street."

"Good-night."

The young man turned into Leonard street and disappeared.

The actor stood as one in a maze.

"What can a gentleman like that want in Baxter street—the worst hole in all New York—at this hour of the night? Ah! And Mordaunt started as a thought flashed into his mind. 'The other—his walking image—turned down Leonard street; that is, if I am not mad or have not dreamed it. Can these two men have any thing in common—the one who has treated me like a Christian and the other who treated me as a dog? Something tells me to follow this man—that he is in danger. He is a stranger to this locality, that is certain. No stranger is safe, alone, in the shadows of Baxter. Can it be that he is being lured into danger? Either I am mad or else my excited mind sees things with spiritual clearness, and I feel that there is a shadow hovering over that man's footsteps. A shadow—a shadow! and it takes the shape of his own image that passed this same way an hour ago. No, I'm not crazed. I feel that my generous friend is walking into a snare. Shall I not follow? Ay, but what can I, with my shattered nerves and trembling limbs, do to aid that friend if he shall need it? Do? Why, I am strong! Mordaunt is himself again when duty and humanity call! I'll follow and be his good shadow, though all the devils of Baxter street shrieked 'Away!' in my ears."

The actor thrust the bill into his pocket, and looked at the card that the young man said bore his address. On it, in a bold, manly hand, was written:

ALLYN STRATHROY,
No. 268 FIFTH AVENUE.

"Strathroy," muttered Mordaunt to himself, as he hurried onward down Leonard street toward Elm; "it is a Scotch name—it is not familiar to me."

CHAPTER II.

THE STRATHROY MYSTERY.

In the front room of a small, two-story wooden house on Baxter street, some few doors from Leonard street, sat two persons. One was a man well advanced in years, though his massive frame and rugged features showed few marks of old father Time's withering hand. His face was of the bulldog type—heavy, firm-set jaws, low, overhanging forehead, little, gleaming eyes; the hair jet-black and cropped tight to the head. He was known as John Duke, and more familiarly called Duke, the Slasher. By profession, he was a "shoulder-hitter"—a burglar, too, at times; a noted ward politician—one whom the law was always reaching for, and yet one whom the law seldom harmed. For Duke, the Slasher, had friends high in power—friends for whom his strong right arm often had struck in a closely contested election.

John Duke was a representative of a class that exists only in New York city. Nowhere in all our land can we find the professional bully hand and glove with the officers of justice, but in the "Great Metropolis."

The other was quite a young man, of about three and twenty. He was a handsome fellow, with his finely proportioned, muscular form, his dark-blue eyes, that looked black a few paces off, his regular and clearly-cut features, his olive-tinted skin, and his dark-brown hair that curled tightly to his head.

He was called James Kidd—a child of chance, born he knew not where; reared, he knew not how. His earliest remembrance was of the street—of hard words and of still harder blows. He had grown to manhood an outcast and a thief. A bad fortune had thrown him in the way of the notorious Slasher. That worthy was pleased with the quick, keen-eyed lad. He saw that he had brains. He was the man that he had been looking for. So John Duke and James Kidd became friends—partners.

For three years they had been associates. And in those three years the desperate Slasher had learned to fear the tool which he had taken in his hand. He had discovered that Kidd was fully as reckless of personal danger as himself; almost his match in strength, and more than his match in skill. In dash and audacity the young man far outdid the veteran bruiser.

The Slasher fully realized that his instrument had become his master. The brains of Kidd raised him far above the level of the shoulder-hitter.

The room in which the two sat was quite small, and had a moldy smell that told of age and decay. The windows that looked upon the street were barred by heavy shutters as though the inmates feared the daylight. A small table, on which was placed a lighted candle, two common chairs and a little iron bedstead composed the furniture of the apartment.

This was the home of James Kidd. "Jimmy," said the Slasher, suddenly, and casting a searching glance at the face of his companion, "what's the matter with you—what's broke?"

"Why do you ask?" said Kidd, in a rich voice, that was an agreeable contrast to the hoarse tone of the bruiser.

"Oh, jist for greens!" observed the Slasher,

with a chuckle. "For 'bout ten days I've noticed that you ain't O. K.—that you've been down in the mouth. What's up now, say?"

"Duke, ten days ago I fell in love," said the young man, with a forced laugh.

"You don't tell me so!" cried Duke, in amazement. "Who's the gal? Do I know her?"

"Oh, no!" responded Kidd, quickly, a look of disgust passing over his face. "She is not one of the kind that we meet. She's a lady—a Fifth avenue belle—and as far removed from me as heaven is from earth."

"Well, of all the mad fancies that I ever did hear tell of!" said the Slasher, in wonder. "Why, what put this cussed nonsense into your head?"

"I'll tell you all about it," said Kidd, slowly. "I was up to the Academy of Music one Saturday. I was waiting outside to see Billy McLean, by appointment, to find out how much he was willing to come down for our crowd, in case we agreed to support him for alderman. As I stood on the steps waiting for him to come out, this girl came down the steps and entered her carriage. Never before in my life had I seen a woman that I would have turned my head to look at a second time, but, the moment my eyes fell on this girl's face I said to myself, 'To obtain that girl I'd give ten years of my life.'"

Duke started at the tone in which the young man spoke.

"Oh, now! that's cutting it too fat," the Slasher said, with a grin; "ten years is a long time. I found one year mighty long when I was up to Sing Sing."

"This woman—or girl rather, for she's only eighteen—is worth it," said Kidd.

"Well, I never see'd the gal yet that I'd go my pile on, except a sister of mine, an' she died with a broken heart, 'cos she was too good for this world," said the Slasher, thoughtfully.

"The girl has made me mad!" cried Kidd, fiercely, his eyes gleaming with passion, and the big veins standing out like whip-cords on his forehead. "I can think of nothing but her. She is ever before my eyes, sleeping or waking. I have determined to have her, come what may."

"The devil you have!" exclaimed the Slasher in amazement.

"Yes," replied the other, "I found out all about her. She is an orphan and engaged to be married."

"Well, that blocks your little game."

"No, it aint it."

Duke looked at the speaker in astonishment.

"I don't understand!"

"Very likely, but I do," returned the young man. "I have a plan in my head that is the scheme of a madman, and yet I am going to attempt it. It is so bold that none but a madman can succeed."

"And are you mad?" said the Slasher, not able to comprehend the strange words of his companion.

"Yes, at present; mad with love's frenzy," replied the young man.

"Well, I can't make head or tail of what you've been saying," said the puzzled shoulder-hitter.

"Very likely. As I have said, a madman alone could form the plan that I am about to attempt to carry out; so a madman alone could guess it."

"Well, anyway, I shall know whether you succeed or fail."

"No, you are wrong," replied the other; "no one in this world will know it—not even the girl herself."

Duke began to think that his companion had gone mad in reality.

"How can you marry the girl—'cos I s'pose that's what you're after—without her knowing that you do marry her?" he asked.

"That is my secret. But, I tell you, John Duke, that if my plan succeeds, I, the child of chance, the outcast, will marry this girl, and yet she herself will not know that she marries James Kidd, the rough of Baxter street."

"Mighty little, 'rough' there is about you," said Duke.

"I may puzzle wiser heads than yours, Duke, before I get through with this work," said the young man, coldly. "I am tired of my present life. It is too petty, low, circumscribed for me. I am capable of better things. I mean to rise in the world, and shall not hesitate as to the means, even though I redden my path with blood. I was not born for little things."

Cold as ice was the tone of the speaker, but fierce was the determination expressed therein. Duke—ruffian, blood-stained villain, as he was—felt a thrill of horror come over him, as he looked upon the gleaming eyes of the man before him.

"He's a devil—a very devil!" Duke muttered to himself, in an undertone. "But he'll do what he says, that I know."

"By the way, Duke, you mentioned a certain person the other day, that I should like to know more of; this Allyn Strathroy. You told me that his father disappeared some twenty-two years ago, and has never been heard of since. You also said that you knew why he had disappeared."

"So I do," said Duke; "I know all about it, and if it hadn't been for me, Clinton Strathroy—that's the name of this Allyn's father—would probably be in New York, alive, to-day."

"Yes, you stabbed him in the open street twenty-three years ago, for which crime you were sent to Sing Sing for five years," said Kidd, slowly.

"That's true; but as my services were extremely valuable in a certain election, my political friends got me pardoned out after serving a year. But, how did you know 'bout that affair? You were a kid then?" asked the Slasher, in astonishment.

"I read the account in an old file of the *Herald*. It stated that the assault was caused by some personal quarrel between you and this Clinton Strathroy."

"I'll tell you all about it," said Duke, after a moment's thought. "In 1846 I was quite a young fellow. I was a butcher-boy by trade, but I didn't do much work 'cos I liked to loaf around the engine-houses better, or to go off on a *tear* with the boys. I had a sister just eighteen years old, and she was just as pretty a gal as a man would want to look at. She tended in a fancy goods store on the Bowery. In some way this Clinton Strathroy got acquainted with her. He pretended to love her, and she—poor, foolish child—thought that this wealthy Fifth-avenue 'blood' meant honest by her. Just at this time I had to leave New York, 'cos in a little rumpus at a fire in the Bowery, I pretty near killed a policeman, and I had to get out of the way until the affair blew over. When I came back to New York, Lizzie—that was my sister's name—had disappeared. I hunted for her high and low, for Lize was the only one in this world that I cared two cents for. But I couldn't find her. I found out, of course, that this Clinton Strathroy had been making love to her. I had a suspicion that he knew where she was, so I went to his house on Fifth avenue, but he was not at home. Then I felt sure that he had something to do with Lizzie's going away. I kept a close watch upon this man's house. For a whole year he was away from New York; then he returned, bringing a wife with him—a Southern gal—that he had just married. Then for the first time I began to think that perhaps I had wronged him in regard to my sister. But, about six months after that time, I was down on the docks one day, when a Charleston steamer landed, and from the steamer, carrying a baby in her arms, came Lizzie. It was the old story. This Clinton Strathroy had persuaded her to run away with him. They had been married by some minister here in New York. She had forgotten the name and the place where she had been married, and Strathroy had kept the marriage-certificate—that is, if there ever was such a thing, 'cos I thought all the while that she had been gulled by a mock-marriage. After the marriage he had taken her down South. There the child was born, a boy. After the birth of the child, Strathroy began to treat her coldly, and at last, one day, he told her that it was all over between them—that she was not lawfully his wife—and then he deserted her. She managed at last to beg her way to New York. After she told me how she had been treated by this man, I went for him—met him on Broadway, and stabbed him on sight. For that I was arrested and sent to Sing Sing. Strathroy recovered. I had put my sister in comfortable lodgings, in Hester street, but while I was in prison she died—died of a broken heart. I sent for her baby and made arrangements to have it looked after in Sing Sing village—boarded with a woman there. It was a pretty little blue-eyed baby."

"After being in Sing Sing a year, I was pardoned out. I came to New York to close up the old account, for I had sworn in open court that I'd kill Clinton Strathroy, and I meant to do it. But he, hearing that I had been pardoned, and I s'pose feeling pretty sure that I would be as good as my word, left the city and has never been heard of since."

"And what became of the child?" Kidd asked.

"I don't know. After I came to the city to settle with Clinton Strathroy, and found that he'd run away, I went back to Sing Sing to get the baby, and there I found neither woman nor child. Both had gone. The woman had stolen the baby and left with it."

"A strange circumstance."

"Yes, and from that day to this I never have heard a single word 'bout either," said the Slasher. "But, I'll tell you the queerest thing about the whole affair. My sister's baby was baptized in Charleston, South Carolina, by the name of Allyne Strathroy—Allyne was his father's name—and Strathroy's son by his wife here was also called Allyne Strathroy. So, you see, there's two Allyne Strathroys in the world, somewhere, and I've often thought that it would be funny if these two Allynes should meet, and the first Allyne avenge upon the second the wrong that has been done his mother; and, mind you, neither of the two knowing that they are half-brothers."

"About as likely to happen as for two Sundays to come together," said Kidd.

"Exactly; but as queer things as that do happen sometimes."

"By the way, John, I expect a caller, and if you've settled all about the election affair—"

Kidd said.

"Yes, all right. Good-night," and the Slasher left the room, leaving Kidd to his own fearful thoughts.

Strathroy turned into Baxter street and paused for a moment, as if uncertain how to proceed. Then, after examining the

number of the house before which he stood, he turned to the left. A few steps on he passed before the door of a small wooden house, and, after feeling in vain for a bell-knob, he rapped loudly on the door.

In a few seconds the door was opened, and Allyne entered the house. The door closing after, hid him from the eyes of the actor, who, on the other side of the street, concealed in the shadow of a doorway, was watching him with eager eyes.

"Well, that's a nice-looking sort of a crib for a gentlemanly-looking young fellow like this one to visit. What on earth can bring him to this sweet-smelling locality?" mused Mordaunt, as he surveyed the building into which the young man had gone.

"It's all dark; no light or sign of life there," he continued. "Since I've come so far, 'pricked to't by foolish honesty and love,' I'll stay here until he comes out—that is, if he does come out. And if this is any sort of a trap into which he has fallen, he can't be put out of the way without some little noise, which I'll be apt to hear. I don't often take fancies for men; I've learned too much of the world for that; but this man is a man by whom I can swear, and I'll stand by him as by my own life. I'll watch."

So Mordaunt seated himself in a doorway and remained with his eyes intently fixed upon the mysterious-looking building opposite.

After the Slasher had departed, James Kidd paced rapidly up and down the little room for a minute or two, apparently in deep thought. His steps were noiseless, and resembled more the stealthy tread of the tiger creeping in upon its prey than the firm step of a human being.

"Will he come?" he muttered, as he paused, and for a moment listened as seeking an answer to his question from the silence of the night. "And if he does come," he continued in his musings, "shall I?" There was a fearful meaning in the obscure question.

Then the young man set his teeth firmly together and struck the table, lightly, with his clenched hand.

"Yes, be it for good or evil. If it gives Blanche Maybury into my arms, or gives my neck to the hangman's noose, I will do it! Some invisible power is leading me on. Is it Fate, or is it the Original Sin, which, the ministers say, is born in us?"

Kidd went to the bed, and, turning down the covering, drew from beneath the pillow a long, narrow dagger. It was an Italian stiletto, keen and sharp as a razor. It had been ground down until it was hardly half an inch in width, although some eight inches in length.

Thoughtfully, the young man ran his finger over the edges of the knife.

"This it was which the Italian burglar used when he stabbed the policeman. A single blow, and death came instantly." The muscles of the hardened face seemed to deaden into stone as he spoke the words. Involuntarily, as it were, his fingers closed about the handle of the deadly-looking weapon.

"It must be a single blow, and that sure. No noise—no violence; and then—then an effort which will require all my mind—all my nerve. I'll risk it!" And having come to this conclusion, Kidd placed the knife carefully in an inside pocket in his coat.

Allyne Strathroy, when the door was opened in the wooden shanty—for it was little better—at which he had knocked, saw before him the figure of a man. The entryway was dark; but, by the street light, Allyne could see that the man had his head tied in a colored handkerchief, and wore a pair of green spectacles.

"Does Mr. Williams reside here?" asked Strathroy.

"Yes," answered the man, in a somewhat hoarse voice.

Strathroy started. He felt sure that he had heard the voice before, somewhere; and the impression came upon him that the man was trying to disguise his voice.

"I received a note from this Mr. Williams requesting me to call here this evening about nine, as he had some information to give me in regard to a certain matter."

"Yes, sir; I understand. Will you walk up-stairs?" And the man turned and led the way through the entry. Strathroy followed, keeping, however, a wary eye upon the movements of the person before him, and quietly drawing from his pocket a little revolver, which he carried in his hand ready for use at the slightest sign of danger. Allyne was a New-Yorker, and knew full well the character of the locality in which he was. He did not intend to be led into a trap and slaughtered like a blind puppy. But the man went straight onward, up the little, crooked stairs, and into a small room at the head of the landing. This room was plainly furnished, and lit by a single candle.

As Strathroy entered the circle of light, he carelessly slid his revolver into the side-pocket of his overcoat, still keeping his hand upon it, ready for instant action should occasion demand it.

"Sit down, sir," said the stranger, after they had entered the room. Again the voice sounded familiar to Allyne; it seemed almost like an echo of his own.

"Have you the letter, sir?" asked the man, after Allyne had sat down.

"Yes, here it is," said Allyne, laying it upon the table.

"You were not afraid to come here, at this hour?" questioned the stranger.

"No," replied Allyne; "I am armed," and he drew the revolver from his pocket, then slid it back again, "you see. Besides, I haven't a single cent upon my person. My watch, rings, etc., are all at home. So that if the design was to plunder me, you would be foiled."

"I merely asked the question for information, that is all," replied the man, while a strange light gleamed in the dark-blue eyes that the green glasses hid. "I am Mr. Williams. I wrote that letter, telling you that I could give you information in regard to the fate of your father, Clinton Strathroy, who so mysteriously disappeared twenty-two years ago. But, I have failed in one important point and can not say any thing to-night. If you will come here at ten, to-morrow, and are willing to pay—I will take your word for the amount—you shall know the fate of your father."

Allyne looked keenly at the speaker. Despite the bandaged head, despite the green glasses, Allyne traced a resemblance in the face—a resemblance to pictures of his father, taken when that father was a young man. Strathroy was puzzled.

"To-morrow, then?" Allyne said.

"To-morrow," the man repeated.

Allyne turned to go, when, with the spring of a tiger, the stranger leaped upon him. One strong arm was wound around his neck; the flash of a keen-edged knife dazzled his eyes.

Little use was Strathroy's revolver—away in his pocket—against this unlooked-for attack. With desperate energy, Allyne strove to free himself from the iron-like grip of his unknown assailant. In the full vigor of manhood, with strength unimpaired, Strathroy, before this hour, never had met his master; but, now, vain was his effort to break the vice-like grasp of his foe.

The iron hand on his throat stifled his utterance; the steel was flashing before his eyes. With a last, desperate effort—for he felt that his strength was going fast—Allyne struggled for his life.

(To be Continued.)

The Masked Miner:

OR,

THE IRON-MERCHANT'S DAUGHTER.

A TALE OF PITTSBURGH.

BY WM. MASON TURNER.

AUTHOR OF "UNDER RAIL," "SILKEN CORD," ETC.

CHAPTER XIV.

MIDNIGHT WHISPERS.

NIGHT gloomed down over the place; the city lay quiet—sleeping beneath the heavy pall of darkness; and its own constantly overhanging clouds of soot and smoke.

It had been an eventful day in this city of iron and coal—the day just passed; and in certain circles an excitement was created, seldom witnessed.

The main incidents of this singular case of abduction may still be remembered by many worthy denizens of the Smoky Town; and to the author's certain knowledge—for we have seen him recently—the estimable alderman before whom Tom Worth had his preliminary examination, is to-day living.

Of course such court cases, nevertheless, occur daily in all of our great cities, but they are quickly decided, and are rapidly and speedily forgotten. The ripple on the surface of society, they may create, gradually, nay, oftentimes, trembles away toward the shores, and is lost amid the wavelets that fret and break upon the margin of the life-sea.

So it may be of the incidents in the tale we are weaving. We have chosen it from among several—have dignified it, and given it prominence and importance. Of course, attention will be drawn to it, and there may be some, or many, who will cavil at its truthfulness, and doubt the authenticity of the case as we have recorded it.

To such we will simply say, consult the criminal annals of the city for that particular twelve months—only ten years since—and you will find the case. Of course, we have changed it in some particulars, to suit our purpose; but you can find it, and the good-natured clerk of the court, for a small fee, will allow you to sit in his large, musty office on Grant's Hill, and look over the record to your heart's content. We have simply "varnished" the tale, in accordance with the privilege of authorship, but we have not obscured its truth thereby.

Well, then, it was night over the city, and the worthy (and unworthy) denizens of the place were for the most part wrapped in slumber, some perhaps dreaming of gold, others of approaching happiness; others, perhaps, of the singular trial witnessed that day at Alderman March's office, on Penn street, and the very strange conduct on the part of Tom Worth, "the poor miner," as he was generally spoken of.

That night, about eleven o'clock, a man stood at the corner of Bedford avenue and Fulton street; he had just reached the intersection of the two streets, and then stood there, looking around him in every direction, as if undecided which way to go, whether on up the avenue, or out into the street, and thence to the summit of Cliff Hill.

As he stood thus, hesitating and undecided, he suddenly heard footsteps behind him. The place was lonely and unfrequented

at all times; now it was deserted and desolate. The man hastily thrust his hand in his bosom, and backed himself up against the embankment, as if to let the other pass.

The man who was coming up, evidently from the not very distant Boyd's Hill, had seen the other as he stood at the corner of the two streets; but he did not hesitate. He continued straight on, turned into Bedford avenue, and was hurrying down the steep descent, when he was suddenly halted by the motionless one. He stopped short in his walk, and with a light laugh turned back.

"Ah, my fine fellow; I was sure it was you, and walked by to try you, to see if you would know your boss!"

"I did not indeed, know you, boss, until I saw that long coat; then I would have sworn 'twas you."

"Yes, the coat, ha! ha! But, my good fellow, how is it?" Any suspicious characters around the nest?"

"No, boss; none."

"Glad to hear it!" exclaimed the other; "from what that infernal scoundrel, now in jail—may he rot there!—said, I feared that others perhaps might think as he did."

"I do not know what he said, boss, but I do know that that fellow followed two others from Boyd's Hill on Tuesday night—ha! ha!"

"Yes, he did; and, by heavens! that toll-keeper, Markley, saw him afterward with one of these same fellows! Good thing that evidence of Markley's; but, I have seen several men, certainly one, who resembled that jail-bird considerably, eh?"

"You're right, boss; so have I! And, perhaps—"

"Yes, you, I know what you would say, and, here, my fine fellow, is a purse containing gold. 'Tis yours; and now good-night!" These words were spoken in a significant tone.

"Good-night, boss," replied the other, and without a word more of this singular, incoherent conversation, which despite the loneliness of the place, had been carried on in a half-whisper, the men separated—the one styled "boss," continuing down Bedford avenue, toward the heart of the sleeping city; the other turning abruptly off from the same avenue, and was soon lost in the shades that hung over the tall Cliff Hill.

Tom Worth sat on a low stool one long hour after his incarceration; but he was suddenly aroused by the key grating and creaking in the lock, and then the cell door was opened. One of the jailer's underlings appeared, lugging after him a huge bundle of bed-clothing.

"An old man brought this for you," he said, in a kind tone, "and we allowed him to leave it. Here is a note, also, which he sent; we have examined it, and you are allowed to receive it." So saying the man spread out the bundle of coverlets and comforters, and gave the miner the blurred and blotted note.

In a moment he was gone.

Tom Worth opened the note, and his big heart throbbed. His eyes filled with tears as he read the few rudely written lines.

"DEAR, DEAR BOY: I thought you might be cold to-night, my poor Tom, and so I have sent you your covering. I will also say, my dear boy, that I am awful lonesome without you, and that I have cried like a calf, about you, Tom; and, Tom, I will pray to God for your safety."

Your friend till death.

"B. W."

The hours sped on, and still Tom Worth thought not of lying down. Eleven o'clock, and then twelve o'clock struck, and the prisoner arose.

Suddenly, far above him, at a little grate in the cell, looking into the jail-yard, he heard a cautious "hiss!" He glanced up, but could see nothing. Then he heard a low voice, but he drank in every word:

"I followed you, Tom, and I know where they have put you. Speak, my boy! I have twenty stout fellows in jail, who'll tear these bars out for you! Speak the word, and say you're not guilty, Tom! Time flies!"

"No, no, Ben! Go home and pray for me, but no violence, if you love me," was the cautious reply.

"Then good-by, Tom," came in tremulous tones, after a moment's pause, from the speaker above. "I'll do as you say."

"Good-by and God bless you, Ben!"

All was silent again; no more whispers came, and Tom Worth was once more alone.

CHAPTER XV.

A FRIEND THAT STICKS.

As warped and misdirected as were Mr. Harley's notions of right and wrong, in this particular instance, yet our readers must not forget that he was a father, with only one link to bind him to the memory of her who now slept the lasting sleep, beneath a costly mausoleum in Hilldale Cemetery.

He was a fond and doting parent; and the one short week which had elapsed since the sudden disappearance of his daughter, had wrought a marvelous change in the old man. His pomposity of manner had left him; the quick flashing of his imperious eye was now subdued and faint. His haughty stride was now an old man's tottering, feeble step; his every gesture a palpable sign of weakness, a lack of moral and physical nerve.

The ruddy flush of health had passed away from his round, pale cheek, leaving a

hollow and a deathlike pallor there. Doctor Breeze, who more than once, in his own frank, cordial manner, had called to see how matters were, and if any tidings had been heard of the missing maiden, noted the altered appearance of his friend, and had covertly stole his finger over the irregular, jerking pulse, throbbing so heavily under the hot surface of the feverish wrist. And then the old physician had hinted that he had better take care of himself.

The fact is, old Mr. Harley had been thinking a good deal—had been thinking of the unfinished sentence—the incomplete words of Tom Worth, the miner—of the noble, honest look of that poor man. And then gradually he had thought to himself that it was hard to believe Tom Worth guilty of the dark crime, though he had been so quick to believe it. But Fairleigh Somerville had said so!

The old man, sitting late one night in his library, suddenly rose to his feet; a thought had come over him: if possible he would see Tom Worth in his cell!

Still no tidings of the girl; still the old man's rich reward was unclaimed!

We have mentioned that one week had elapsed since the arrest and commitment of Tom Worth for the alleged abduction of Grace Harley.

The time had passed slowly with the unfortunate prisoner. He was a strong man, and one accustomed to daily, vigorous exercise. It may be imagined that an existence, confined to a narrow cell of twelve feet square, and hardly high enough in the ceiling to allow him to stand upright, was one of irksomeness to such a man as Tom Worth. The hours dragged themselves slowly away to him, and he prayed for the night to come, that he might find quiet and forgetfulness in slumber.

For two days no one was allowed to see him, save the turnkey, who, accompanied by an underling, appeared twice a day at the iron door, with the prisoner's meals. This turnkey was kindly disposed toward the unfortunate man whom he fed, for, on every fitting occasion he had a good word—one of cheer, to speak to him.

The fact is, there were many in Pittsburgh who did not entirely believe that Tom Worth was guilty of the crime imputed to him. They thought it strange that a man who had really committed an offense against the law, should peremptorily refuse to accept bail! To them it was a powerful argument that he had preferred to await his trial, at no risk to his friends, and had gone to jail, instead of taking his liberty, which had been almost forced upon him.

Among those who thus thought, though he kept his musings and opinions to himself, was the jailer. So he was very kind to the poor miner, and sought, by all means in his power, to show his sympathy, so as not to go beyond the bounds of propriety as a public officer.

But Tom Worth scarcely noticed this; he was so completely wrapped up in his own thoughts, in his own dreamings, that he paid but little heed to aught else.

Thanks to the kind remembrance of old Ben, he did not suffer in his prison home. He had a good bed, with an abundance of warm covering.

But, old Ben had not been allowed to see his friend, though he had pleaded earnestly to that effect.

On the third day after his incarceration, the prisoner requested the use of paper and ink. The jailer hesitated only for a moment.

"Certainly, Tom," he said; "you shall have it. But, you know no letters can be sent out unless they are inspected first."

"Very good, sir. I simply wished to make certain notes in this case of mine. You know, sir, that I am to be tried, and—"

his voice faltered—"I am a poor man, and can engage no lawyer. I must make an effort and defend myself."

For a moment the jailer looked at him. "You shall have paper and ink," he at length said, in a low voice, "and, Tom, mention it to nobody else—why, though a poor man myself, and with children to feed, yet—why, you see that—well, Tom, in a word, I can let you have fifty dollars. Lawyer Gochrane is a whole-souled man, and he'll defend you for that," and the jailer, as he jingled the heavy keys in the lock, looked at the prisoner again.

"May God bless you and yours, my good friend!" said Tom Worth, as a tear stood in his eye. "I hope the day may yet come when I can tell you how much I am indebted to you. But I'll not take the money. Keep it, my good fellow, for your children, and again may God bless you and them!"

On the next day—that is the fourth day after his arrest—Tom Worth was startled to hear the bolts of his prison-door rattle in the lock. The door was opened. In another moment he was locked in the embrace of Ben Walford.

"I've come, Tom, come at last," said the old man, with emotion, "to tell you I haven't forgot you, my poor boy, and to hug you to my old heart again. God bless you, Tom!"

The jailer turned his eyes away, as he saw the two strong men meet, and heard the words of true devotion which fell from the rough old man's lips.

"Heaven bless you, Ben!" was all that the prisoner could utter.

"I can only say, Tom," continued the old man, "that I am true to you, my boy; to say keep up your spirits; to tell you, my boy, to try and come back soon, for the

hours pass lonesomely in my cabin at night without you; and now! ah! how sorrowful the wind moans over the mountain, to me, all alone! But, good-by, Tom; good-by and may God bless you!"

Then the old miner was gone.

CHAPTER XVI.

A NIGHT COMPACT AND A WIND-WAIF.

NIGHT once more had fallen upon Pittsburgh. The lamps were lit in the smoky streets, and the bell from the neighboring spire had struck nine o'clock. The thoroughfares and avenues wore a deserted look. There were but few persons yet stirring abroad, for the air was chilly and wet, and grates, furnaces and fire-places made it more pleasant to court the comforts of indoors. Despite the chilliness of the night, however, there were walkers abroad, and those who, muffled up and thoroughly concealed, prowled about.

Such were two men. They had just left the dingy parlors of the Shilley Property in Allegheny City, and entered Cedar avenue. They continued their way rapidly on, and at last emerged from the nest of great iron houses huddled by the river-bank, near the Port Wayne railroad bridge. They here glanced around them for a moment, as they stood on the silent abutment. Then, with a half-uttered exclamation of satisfaction, they turned off simultaneously, and were soon within the gloomy recesses of the bridge.

Fifteen minutes elapsed before they emerged from the long bridge and plunged into the dark depths of the sleeping city, on the other side of the river.

They hurried rapidly on until they reached the straight double track of the Pennsylvania railroad; turning abruptly down which they strode on for several hundred yards.

Suddenly they paused. "Here we are, Launce," said one of the men, glancing up at the steep face of the cliff to his right.

The speaker was entirely enveloped in a long cloak, reaching almost to his feet. "Tis a rough climb, and we must do it, for it cuts off a long tramp. Come, let's go at it!"

The man turned off the track, and began to climb the high, precipitous hill. His companion followed obediently at his heels. The ascent was arduous, but they did not turn back—did not even pause. They had an object in view—at least one of them had, and they kept on faithfully.

A full half-hour elapsed before they stood panting, almost exhausted, on the crowning point of Cliff Hill. "Come, Launce, let us go down to Bedford avenue, and get out of the reach of this infernal wind!" said the tall man in the long overcoat.

Without stopping to rest, they hastened down Fulton street, and did not pause until they were sheltered in the banks that rose above Bedford avenue.

"Sit down, Launce, somewhere, anywhere, and let's have our final talk about that little matter—your departure."

The man called Launce did not reply at once; he seemed to be thinking. "Yes, boss, yes. But, boss, it seems to me mighty hard to force a man away from his home, and—"

"Force you! Nonsense! It will only be for a time; and then remember, Launce, suppose you were found out! How about the law in your case, resemblance or no resemblance?"

The man started. "True, true, boss," he said, rather humbly. "But, sir, it is hard to say good-by to my poor wife and children! They, sir, do not know that I am a wicked man. I am always gentle and kind to them, boss. They are mine!"

"Again I say nonsense, Launce! You will be paid well—more than ever before. I will pay you to-night. And then, why, tell your wife that you are going on business to Altoona, or further east, to Huntingdon, or—"

"But, boss, I am not going on business, and I never told poor Mary a lie!"

"Then begin at once! Confound you for an obstinate ass, that you are!" exclaimed the other, in an angry tone. "Do you prefer that I should tell that little affair in the mine—have you put in jail, where perhaps you belong? What would your 'poor Mary' think then?"

"No, no, boss! Don't talk of that! I'll do any thing; but, keep that from her! Yet, boss," he suddenly continued, in a firm voice, "could I not tell something on you, and—"

"Dare breathe one word, my fine fellow, and I would shoot you dead in the courtroom! Do not tempt me, too far. You and Teddy are in my power—do not forget it! Now, my terms are these: You shall not lose your position while you are absent. You can resume it when you return. You shall be absent one month; at the expiration of that time the trial will be over, and Edward Markley's testimony can not be subverted. After that event, come when you feel like it, but, mark me, return with a smooth face. In payment for this service I will give into your hands, this very night, at this very spot, the sum of two hundred dollars in gold. Besides that, Launce, it is as much for your interest as mine, that you should be away from Pittsburgh—and you know why. That coincidence was a most fortunate thing for me! Yes! I do not conceal it—for me!"

The other answered not for several moments; he had sealed himself again by the roadside, on the rude stone, and his head was bent upon his breast. But, at length, without looking up, he said:

"Tis all right, boss, and I will obey; but, boss, you promised me a little extra pay for carrying victuals for a certain person, to the old house, you know, sir. I would not tell you of it, sir, but every little thing counts for poor Mary and the children, you know."

"Exactly, Launce; your memory is good; I hadn't forgot my promise. You shall have five dollars extra; that's enough. But are you particular to wear your mask, and answer to no questions?"

"Yes, sir, though this person has never spoken a word to me; and, boss, how do you get along there?" and the man peered straight at him whom he addressed.

The "boss" answered at once.

"Not well, confound the jade! she is as obstinate as can be. Besides that she has pulled a spike out of the wall, which supported a heavy picture-frame, and, in a measure, she defies me! But, she is failing. She can not see daylight, thanks to my no-window-palace, and she is pining—wishes to die, and all that sort of foolish thing. When headstrong maidens get thus, under such circumstances, the end is not far off, and they'll be glad to own a man as husband, who thus triumphs over obstinacy and prejudice! I must have her and her gold!"

"I am half sorry for that girl, boss; she's a good woman, and is kind to us," said Launce.

"Dare show your sympathy for her, by word or sign, and I tell you, Launce, your life would be cheap at nothing! Hark you well—and I am not giving to trifling!"

"I'll not disobey you, boss, in any thing. But now, when shall I go from these parts?"

"Day after to-morrow, by the eastern-bound morning train. Stop where you may, but nowhere under thirty miles from Pittsburgh. Let me know where that stopping-place may be as soon as you are there. Confound this wind! How rough it is!"

The wind had indeed risen, and was howling in gusts along the deep cut of the narrow street, and over the high hill on which they stood.

The man who last spoke—the "boss"—rose to his feet, buttoned his overcoat closer around his chin, and drew the heavy woolen scarf high up about his neck.

The other man arose also.

"We must say good-by, Launce. When you return you will know where to go—every Tuesday night, now, in the 'Shinley,' you know. Here, take the roll; it contains two hundred dollars in twenty-dollar gold-pieces; and here," taking a bank-bill from his vest-pocket, "is a five-dollar note. Carry this vixen her food to-morrow, and on the following morning Teddy will relieve you. Good-by."

"Good-by, boss," replied the other, taking the money, "and thank you, too, sir."

The two men separated—Launce returning up Cliff Hill, which he descended to the track of the railroad; and then he was soon lost in the gloom toward the Union depot.

The other started down Bedford avenue, turned abruptly to the left, and, winding his way along a deep gully, and across an open common, he finally entered Stephenson street, up which he strode at a rapid stride.

The hours grew on, and the black night came down, blacker every moment. The hoarse wind, now blowing a half-hurricane, tore shudderingly through the dark streets, banging unbolted shutters, and swinging creaking signs with its breath of storm and fury.

So rough indeed and wild was the driving gale, that it shook the mysterious old house on Boyd's Hill to its foundations. Half asleep, and yet far from being asleep in the true sense of the word, Grace Harley, within the one strange room of that old habitation, sat leaning on her elbow, as she heard the mad wind howling and roaring outside, and as she felt the uncertain tremor of the structure, as, exposed on the top of the bleak hill to the full fury of the hurricane, it shook and vibrated fearfully.

Then she sat upright. A low light was burning from the splendid chandelier—just enough to reveal the gorgeous, glaring paintings, hanging on the walls—enough to show the costly carpet, and the rare furniture of the apartment; enough, too, to light up the haggard cheek, the lack-luster eye, the falling form of the wretched girl.

"Good heavens!" she murmured, "what is that?" Am I to die thus and here, all alone?"

The hideous thought that the house would be blown down rushed over her brain. "What is that?" she again suddenly exclaimed, as a rustling, rattling sound, as if something was being driven down the chimney, fell upon her ear.

The girl cowered away upon the sofa in very dread. Then the cause of the singular noise was, all at once, explained.

A stray newspaper, tattered and bedraggled, caught by the wanton wind, had been literally forced down the chimney flue.

With a faint, sickly smile, at her own needless terror, the girl drew near and picked up the paper. It was an old number, dated two days after the event on the Mount Washington road.

Grace Harley cast her eyes over it. Suddenly she started as her gaze fell on a particular paragraph—her eyes seeming to glow over the printed words.

She hastily turned the light on, and sinking into a chair, commenced to scan that short paragraph. At that instant, however, a heavy step sounded without, and the girl just had time, as a wild shudder swept over her frame, to cram the newspaper into her bosom, and shrink back to the sofa she had left, as a key grated harshly in the lock.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 15.)

The Ace of Spades: OR, IOLA, THE STREET SWEEPER.

BY ALBERT W. AIKEN.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

A DESPERATE DEED.

IOLA waited until after Bill brought in her meager supper and a lighted candle, before she recommenced her attempt to escape from her prison.

Bill locked the door behind him as usual. Iola made but a light supper. She could not eat. All her thoughts, all her wishes were concentrated, on one object, and that object was to free herself from the power of her brutal tyrant, whom she hated now ten times more bitterly than she had ever done before.

Iola waited until she heard a distant bell ring out nine o'clock on the night-air.

"Now I shall not be disturbed," she said, as with the blade of the knife for a weapon she made an attack upon the wall of the closet.

And at the very moment that the girl was, with blistered hands, piercing the closet wall, the "Marquis," her protector—not five hundred yards from her—was engaged in a hand-to-hand encounter with English Bill.

At the end of an hour Iola had removed all the plaster from a place about two feet square. Nothing now remained but the thin laths to bar her passage into the other room.

The girl had set the candle down upon the floor near her so as to give her light, and also to prevent it from throwing its rays through the holes in the shutters, and thus betray to any one outside, who might chance to look up, that she had not retired to rest.

Another hour of hard work and but two laths remained.

Escape seemed so near that the heart of the girl beat joyfully. She did not mind the pain of her bleeding hands, torn here and there by the splinters of the wood, or chafed into blisters by the knife, that, lacking a handle, was extremely difficult to use.

Yet still, cheerfully, despite the obstacles, Iola worked on. Each cut of the knife brought her so much nearer freedom; each lath that she broke off and threw to the floor was a barrier between her and the "Marquis" removed.

Iola did not doubt for a single instant that if she succeeded in getting into the other room, she could easily make her way into the street, and once there she was free—free to go where she liked.

"Oh! to-morrow I shall feel his arms around me; to-morrow, perhaps, I shall feel his kiss upon my lips, for he will kiss me if he's half as glad to see me as I shall be to see him, and I do not doubt that!" she murmured, as she toiled without ceasing at the wall.

Then, with her slender fingers she broke off another lath—that she had saved through with the knife—and cast it down.

"One more!" she cried, in glee. "One more, and then I am free! Oh! how Bill will swear when he comes in the morning and finds that the cage is empty and the bird is gone. I will never be trapped again as I was this time!"

And so, with a heart beating high at the thoughts of that freedom that seemed so near—yet might be so far, for a hundred things might happen to defeat her plans—Iola cut into the last remaining lath.

The little hands were sore, indeed, but the girl heeded not the pain.

The lath broke in her grip, she casts it to the floor beside the others.

"At last!" she cried, in triumph.

The way of escape was open; already in imagination she was in the glad embrace of the man she loved so well.

Iola rose to her feet. Her limbs ached. She had been so long upon her knees in incessant toil that at first she could hardly stand.

Just as the girl was about to crawl through the hole that she had made in the wall, the key in the lock of the door turned suddenly, the door opened and Bill entered. The rough was in his stocking feet; he had drawn off his boots, and crept upstairs slyly, as though with a purpose to surprise the girl.

Iola uttered a slight scream, as her eyes fell upon the figure of the rough. The attempted escape was discovered. The truth could not be disguised; yet in the scream of the girl there was more of anger than alarm.

"So, my beauty, you were a-goin' away without even havin' the permissiveness for to come an' say 'good-by' to your 'flectionate friends,' said Bill, with mock respect. Iola saw at once that the rough had been drinking heavily. His inflamed eyes, and flushed

face would have told her so, if his manner had not.

"Goin' to git up an' dust, were you, my lady-bird? Wasn't it lucky that I'd thought I'd come up an' see arter your health? I think so much of you, my dear; you know I do, don't you?" and the rough laughed a drunken, brutal laugh.

Iola felt that she was becoming desperate. To be detected at the very moment that the way of escape lay open before her was bitter indeed.

"Why don't you answer me when I speaks to you, you she-devil, you? Goin' to run away ag'in, was you? Where was you a-goin' to, hey?" demanded the drunken ruffian, swaying unsteadily in the doorway. "Anywhere out of your reach!" cried Iola, desperately.

"Well, that's nice conduct for a dotiful darter, I must say," cried Bill, indignantly.

"And a nice father you are!" returned the girl, in scorn, her eyes flashing fire and her white teeth clenched convulsively together.

"Don't you talk back to me, you young whelp!" exclaimed Bill, in a rage. "I know where you are a-goin'! You want to go to that 'Marquis,' but you won't go to him no more. I've fixed him!"

"What do you mean?" asked Iola.

"Why, I just wrote him a letter, wot said as how if he'd come to the pier foot of Fortieth street, that he'd hear news of a little gal that had been took away," and Bill laughed discordantly as he told of the little trap that he had laid for the young man.

"And he came?"

"Yes, in course, he did, an' I were a-waitin' on the end of the pier for him. When he see'd my face, he started as if he had seen a ghost, an' then I went for him, lively! The end of it was that I pitched him into the water, an' I don't doubt that the fishes are a-feedin' on the flesh of your lover now!" Bill had not held quite to the truth in his narrative of his encounter with the "Marquis," as the reader has probably observed. He omitted all account of how that gentleman had pitched him to the earth as if he had been a sack of wheat.

Bill's story made but little impression upon Iola. She did not believe one single word that he had said. As to the "Marquis" suffering injury at the hands of Bill in a fair encounter, she utterly repudiated the idea.

"You don't seem to care much 'bout his death?" said Bill, in astonishment. He had expected that the girl would give way to a flood of tears.

"I do not believe what you say," replied Iola, in scorn.

"You don't believe me!" cried Bill, in wonder, not unmixed with rage.

"No, I do not!" reaffirmed the girl.

"Well, it's the truth!" cried Bill.

Iola looked at him with scorn fully expressed in her large eyes, but made no reply.

"What did you make that hole for, say?" demanded Bill, although he hadn't much doubt as to the girl's purpose.

"To escape from this prison that you have put me in!" replied Iola, undauntedly.

"The devil you did!" exclaimed Bill, astonished and angered at the boldness of the reply.

"Yes, and sooner or later I will escape from you!" cried the girl, drawing up her slender figure to its utmost height, while fierce determination shone in the flashing eyes.

"Do you want me to murder you?" cried Bill, savagely, advancing a little way into the room.

"You don't doubt that you want to do it, you utter coward!" cried the girl, hotly, retreating to the table as she spoke.

"If I lift my arm to you now, you won't have any lover to interfere, curse him!" cried Bill.

"No, if he were here—whom you call my lover, but whom I only know as the kind-hearted gentleman who dared to protect me, the poor girl—you would not dare to threaten me!" exclaimed Iola, not at all frightened by the threatening manner of the rough.

"He'll never protect you, not no more!" cried Bill, fiercely, and with the utmost contempt for the rules of Lindley Murray. "He's gone where the dogs won't find him, an' I put him there."

"If you have harmed him, you attacked him treacherously then, behind his back!" cried the girl.

"You lie, you little devil, you!" howled Bill, in a rage, advancing with uplifted arm to strike the girl. But, quick as thought, Iola emptied the water from the heavy pitcher upon the floor, and raised the pitcher as if to hurl it at the head of the ruffian.

Bill recoiled, more in astonishment than in alarm, when he beheld this display of spirit upon the part of the girl whom he had beaten so often, and who before had never attempted to resist.

"Well, I'm blessed if this don't get me!" said Bill, in astonishment, as he gazed upon the slight girlish figure that stood so defiantly before him. "What are you a-goin' to do with that pitcher?" he asked.

"Throw it at your head, if you come near me!" was the startling reply that the ruffian received.

"Why, look a-here, gal, you're mad!" cried Bill.

"No, I am not, but I am desperate. I would rather die than stay here with you, now that I know what I do! I am a child no longer, but a woman, and if you come near me, I will hurt you!"

"Put down that pitcher!" yelled Bill, maddened by the words, and his passion increased by the bad whisky that he had drank.

"I will not!" cried Iola, desperately.

"I'll make you!" cried Bill; and, regardless of her threatening attitude, he rushed toward her.

Iola was as good as her word, for, as Bill advanced, she hurled the heavy pitcher with all her force at his head. Bill attempted to dodge, but the attempt was made too late. The heavy pitcher, flying through the air with no slight force, struck him full in the temple and sprawled him over on his back, stunned and bleeding; the pitcher breaking into pieces at the force of the blow.

With a scream of joy, Iola seized her hat and cloak, leaped over the body of the prostrate man, ran down the stairs, through the entry and into the street.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE MARQUIS' PATENT OF NOBILITY.

CATTERTON, on his homeward way, reached Union square just as the clocks were striking twelve.

The young man was perplexed; the more he thought of the strange knowledge evidently possessed by the man who had written Tremaine the note, the more he was mystified.

"How could any one else guess the secret that I alone know, or, at least, that I thought was in my possession alone?" exclaimed the "Marquis," who could guess no solution to the riddle.

Catterton crossed Union square and continued on down Broadway.

As the "Marquis" passed Astor place a girl in a light dress and dark cloak turned into Broadway just ahead of him.

The girl hurried on as if afraid of being pursued. The figure was strangely familiar to Catterton. He resolved to see who it was and quickened his steps. He gained rapidly upon the girl. She, hearing the noise of his footstep, turned her head in alarm to discover who it was that was behind her. And to the joy of the young man he saw the face of the abducted girl.

"Iola!" he cried.

"Daniel!" she exclaimed, in joy, and, without reflecting that she was in the public street, and that—though the hour was late—there might be many passing by to wonder at her action, she threw herself, with a half-sob, upon his breast.

For a moment the "Marquis" was as thoughtless as the girl, for he strained the little figure to his breast with an earnestness that told plainly how great was his joy at meeting her. Then releasing her, he drew her arm within his own and they proceeded on down Broadway.

Briefly, Iola told the story of her escape from the power of the ruffian, English Bill.

After getting into the street—which she reached without molestation—she ran forward, turning to the right, without any thought, except the one of getting away from the neighborhood of the house that had served for her prison as soon as possible. Luckily she had turned in the right direction and soon reached Second avenue. Inquiring the way from a passer-by, she ran on down the avenue; then went through Thirtieth street to Third avenue, and down Third avenue until she reached the Cooper Institute. Then she went through Astor place to Broadway; and so had chance to meet with the young man.

"But where are you going?" asked Catterton, after she had finished.

"Where could I go but to you?" asked Iola, innocently. "You are the only friend that I have in the world. The moment that I gained my freedom I remembered that you had told me about your room on Broadway. I remembered the number, too, and so I was coming to you as fast as I could."

"The heart of the 'Marquis' gave a great leap for joy at the words of the girl.

"How lucky it was that I met you," she continued, as they walked on, arm in arm. "Heaven seems to have directed my steps to-night."

"Yes," replied Catterton, "and now that I have recovered you, I'll take good care that I don't lose you again."

The two soon reached the room of the "Marquis," and when Catterton entered it with Iola, the astonishment of Jim—who had been asleep on the sofa—was great indeed.

"Now, Iola, make yourself comfortable here to-night, and in the morning I'll find a new boarding-house for you, for I don't dare to trust you back at Mrs. Wiggins', now that Bill knows that you were there. Jim and I will go to a hotel to-night, and I'll bring you some breakfast in the morning."

"Oh, you are so good," murmured Iola, and the large blue eyes that looked at him were full of love indeed.

Jim took his hat and left the room.

"I'll wait for you hat the foot of the stair, you know," said Jim, as he departed. "Two's company hand three hasn't, in a case like this, you know," he observed quietly to himself, as he descended the stairs.

"Oh, I'm not good," responded the young man, "not good at all," he continued; "almost any man that was a gentleman would have acted in the same way that I have. But good-night," and the "Marquis" held out his hand to Iola.

Eagerly the girl took the proffered hand

and then with a sudden impulse threw her arms around his neck and held up her lips to his; and as Catterton gazed in the young face so full of love—as he lightly touched the full, red lips and felt their dewy fragrance upon his own, he became conscious that he loved the girl whose slender figure he held within his arms.

"Good-night!" again he said, and again he touched the lips that so willingly received his kiss. "Oh, Iola!" he cried, impulsively, "I believe I love you!"

"And I know that I love you!" replied the girl, with the charming frankness of innocence. "I have loved you ever since the night when I first met you on Broadway, and I shall love you always."

And thus the lovers parted.

That night the "Marquis" dreamed only of the blue-eyed girl that at last he was conscious that he loved, and Iola's visions were of rest, of peace, and eternal love, as the wife of Daniel Catterton.

Morning came, and about eight o'clock, Catterton, with a breakfast of dainty viands on a waiter, procured from a neighboring eating-house, knocked at the door of the cosy apartment that held the girl he loved.

Upon entering, he found that Iola had been busily engaged in examining his little library.

Bright and cheerful looked the girl. A single night had banished all traces of her imprisonment from her face.

Iola did justice to the breakfast, while the "Marquis" sat and wondered at the prettiness of the girl he had won.

At Catterton's request, Iola gave a full account of her abduction by English Bill, and of her adventures in the old rookery in Fortieth street; not forgetting to relate in full the conversation between Bill and the stranger, in the front room, that she had overheard through the hole in the wall.

She also told Catterton what a strange bearing that conversation had on her life, and the knowledge the conversation she had overheard had given her.

Catterton was almost speechless with astonishment. The revelation of the mystery that had so astonished him, coming from this unexpected source, excited his wonder. He had never even dreamed that the girl that he had befriended, simply from motives of humanity, had any connection with his past life, or held in her hands the key to the riddle that had puzzled him.

"Can this be true?" he exclaimed in wonder.

"Yes, all true," replied the girl.

Then Catterton told Iola the history of the child marked with the Ace of Spades, and how the lightning had imprinted the mark upon the shoulder. He also told her of his connection with the affair, and how the wealthy Fifth-avenue gentleman, Loyal Tremaine, was interested in it.

The "Marquis" now fully understood how the stranger, who had written the note that had agitated Tremaine so greatly, had gained his knowledge, for he was evidently the same person that had held the interview with English Bill, the particulars of which Iola had just related to him.

The mystery that had so puzzled the young man was a mystery no longer.

"This is the strangest combination of circumstances that I have ever heard of!" exclaimed the "Marquis," in wonder.

"But it ends in happiness," said Iola, a bright smile illuminating her features.

"Alas," replied Catterton, with a sigh; "I fear that it will end unhappily for me."

"Why, what do you mean?" asked Iola, in astonishment.

"Iola, I told you last night, that I loved you," said the "Marquis," slowly.

"Yes, and I told you that I loved you," replied Iola, quickly and frankly.

"That is what makes me unhappy," replied Catterton.

Iola opened her eyes wide in astonishment.

"I can not understand you!" she exclaimed; "are you unhappy because you love me and I return that love?"

"Yes," replied the "Marquis," sadly.

"But why should that make you unhappy?" questioned Iola.

"Because I fear that our love is hopeless, and that our union is impossible."

"Who will prevent it, if you and I be willing?" asked Iola, in astonishment.

"The one that has the right to do so," replied Catterton.

"You mean my father?" said Iola.

"Yes."

"He will not keep me from wedding you; that is—if you will have me," and Iola looked shyly and cunningly into the face of her lover.

"You know that there can not be a doubt about that, Iola," replied Catterton.

"I have loved you for some time, although I was really not conscious that I did love you until I held you in my arms last night. It will be the proudest day of my life when I stand with you before the altar and have the right to call you mine forever."

"And if I live, you shall have that right!" cried Iola, quickly. "You are the only friend that I have ever had in the world. Your lips are the only ones that have ever spoken kind words to me; do you think that I could ever forget that, though I should live to be a thousand years old?"

"Iola," time in this world changes many things," replied the "Marquis," and he spoke the truth.

"Time will not change me," replied the girl, decidedly.

"You think so now, Iola, but you are young; as you grow older, you will change."

"Never in my love for you!" said the girl, earnestly.

"Iola, you say that I am the only one that has ever treated you kindly."

"Yes," quickly cried the girl, interrupting him, "you are the only one."

"Perhaps, then, this feeling in your heart which you think is love, is merely gratitude."

In time, you may see some one else. You will then discover the truth, and just think how bitter it will be for me—who truly love you—to know then that you have discovered the truth."

Catterton spoke earnestly, and his tone was clear evidence that he was deeply interested.

"Iola," he continued, "I will not hold you to the avowal that you made last night. I will give you your pledge of love back and forget your words. If in the future, you find that you do love me, then I shall only be too glad to accept and treasure your love."

For a moment Iola did not reply. The convulsive quivering of the lips, the flushed, griefed face, and the large tears that welled slowly into the loving blue eyes, proved how deeply the girl was affected.

"You do not love me at all," at last she said, slowly, and with a great effort forcing the words back.

"Why do you say that?" asked Catterton, while he looked with sorrow upon the mournful face of the girl.

"Because if you did love me, you would not speak this way—you would not wish to drive me from you!" replied Iola, and her face plainly expressed her heartfelt grief.

"Iola, I do not wish to take advantage of your fresh young heart. I wish you to know fully what you are doing when you say, 'you love me,' and consent to become my wife. Iola, some people call me the 'Marquis'; I am proud of the title. Do you know why I am proud of it, and why I am called so?"

"No," answered Iola.

"Because they say that I never deserted a friend or treacherously injured an enemy—that my word was my bond and that I kept that word, even at the risk of life. This is my patent of nobility. If I should accept this love, that you would so freely give me, without warning—without giving you time to think of what you are doing, I should disgrace my marquis-ship and lose all right to the title."

With every word that the young man uttered, Iola's love increased.

"You are so good!" she murmured.

"Iola, I love you better than I do myself—and self-love you know is strong—but not even that love shall prompt me to do you wrong."

"But if after this explanation—if I am sure that I love you—that I will never love any one else—you will not reject that love?" said Iola, imploringly, rising as she spoke, and extending her hands in supplication toward her lover.

"No, if after I have spoken so plainly, you say you love me, I shall believe you!"

With a cry of joy Iola sprang into his arms.

"Oh, I do love you, so much!" she murmured, as she hid her flushed face on his breast.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 2.)

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Will use "FRIENDSHIP." The author writes very well in the line of essays on homely and practical topics—a field which will bear cultivation.

Can not use MS. "DANGEROUS MAN," and return the same, as per stamps inclosed.

Will use Mrs. C.'s "WHAT A LETTER DID." The poems, "ENVY" and "ANGELINE," we can render advantage. The style is very musical and would "set" to music very well.

Henry F. Marsh is informed that one of the very best schools of study in the art of poetry and composition is to peruse Edgar A. Poe's volume called "The Literati." His essay on the "Principles of Poetry," and his numerous contributions on living and dead writers, are full of suggestion and lead to a correct idea of what poetry is, and what it is not. The volume is one that all who aim at success in literature, should read.

Mrs. P. P. Chase is informed that Grace Greenwood is a "real character." She is Mrs. Lippincott—her husband residing in Philadelphia.

We can not use the revised essay on "MORALS." It is much too young in its style and treatment. MS. returned. The writer will do better after more experience with the pen and with life. The same writer's little sermon, "Ours and not Yours," will try easier.

Alex. N. is informed that we have no department for original charades, conundrums, etc., hence we do not care for such contributions.

We shall not use "LARGE AND SMALL CHURCHES": the subject is particularly trite. When our friends essay the essay, they must not only have something original to say but an original way of saying it. Our table is almost cumbered with matter, in prose and verse, possessing that mediocre talent which editors so much dread—the same old idea in the same old garb. Give us no other person's ideas, but your own; if you have any, in terse, direct language; and if there is worth in your contributions we will be sure to see it.

The sketches by Ralph Ringwood are very good and will be rendered available.

Among the MSS. in our "Curiosity Box" is this contribution from Little Miss A. M. C.—only twelve years old and this is the first piece of poetry I ever wrote," she explains in her note. It is rather hard "poetry," but, as the little maid "don't expect any thing for it," we can't be so cruel as to reject it.

THE RESCUE

It was a summer evening,
The sun was in the sky,
And the girl that stood upon the beach,
Saw naught to cause alarm.

But, ah! a black cloud comes in sight,
In front of the bleak, steep rock;
That fell like a bad omen on the ship,
That was striving to gain the dock.

But the young girl saw not the cloud,
She saw naught but the noble ship,
On whose deck the only one she loved,
Was anxious to press her lip.

But, ah! Jehovah gives his sign;
And we hear the thunder roar;
And with a shriek the almost-fainting girl,
Toward the rushing waves is bore.

But Love's eyes are always open,
And the waters had not their prey;
For the life-boat is already lowered,
Without the least delay.

It was not a time to delay;
It was a time to act, to act!
And with a desperate effort
The sailor drew her into the frail raft.

With a long passionate embrace,
Such as only a lover can give,
He folded her to his manly breast,
There forever to live.

"Little Sunshine" has a speak of cloud on the horizon of her young life. Her lover is a gourmand—wants to love all the pretty girls he meets and yet wants Little to shine only for him. She asks: "What is best to do under the circumstances?" Why, ship the fickle fellow off to Corentyne, of course. No young man of honor wants to woo and flirt with the girls when he is already bound by promise to one "dearer and dearer than all!" Set him down, Miss Little, for a scoundrel; deny him your confidence and trust; renege his company. By thus doing you simply assert your own self-respect, and teach triflers a good lesson.

"LOVE SAID NO! AND DUTY SAID YES!" will bear a good deal of retouching to render it acceptable.

The sketch, "ONLY A GOVERNNESS," we will try to give place in some future issue.

The ballad, "DAUGHTER OF CASTLE," we return—not from any lack of merit in the poem, but because of its length.

The sea story, "DOUBLE ESCAPE," will answer.

Foolscap Papers.

At Long Branch.

THERE is probably no habit more worthy of rigid cultivation than that of cleanliness, especially while water is plenty, and soft soap abundant. When I was a boy I formed the resolution to bathe twice every year, when it was absolutely necessary, and at no time have I ever bathed more than fifty per cent of that resolution; and it was for this purpose alone that I came to Long Branch, which was invented expressly for bathing—and every thing else. True, the bathing here costs nothing, but one will find out, or if he don't find out some one will tell him soon enough, and to his entire satisfaction, that to maintain his dignity on the banks of Long Branch it is necessary that he bring a branch bank along, or plenty of baggage as a necessary equivalent.

The season here promises to be more than usually gay—in fact is now, and the crowds of beautiful and gentlemanly ladies here are very bewildering to a married man. Indeed I think a pretty face lends a charm to any landscape, and compels me to worship it—that is, the landscape.

The celebrities here are very numerous, and seem to be quite plenty. Besides myself, there is a regular English lord—I know he is because I saw him going round trying to borrow some money. His style is extravagantly faultless, his manners magnificently superb, and then there are already thirteen mammas paying him the most eloquent attentions, and doing the courting of their thirteen respective, expective daughters, strange as it may seem. I think if he plays his cards right—and he can play them infinitely well—he can marry any or all of them. His side-whiskers are universally stunning, and altogether he doth appear a peer. In his turnout, he rides a high horse, and is the object of all eyes—being well watched. In conversation he leaves all his h's out when he don't forget himself, and talks familiarly of dukes and other curiosities in London.

The Hon. Jefferson Brickbatt, a member of the senate, and lately the head of the committee on other people's affairs—a gentleman of the true metal, brass, is here. He drives two fiery Arabian mules, and is the attraction of all eyes.

The Hon. Mrs. B. is very fascinating, and quite civil toward her husband. Her jewelry consists of one entire set of teeth on gold plate. She drives sixteen span of bridges, and is the cynosure of all eyes.

Patrick Murphee, ambassador from Terra del Fuego, drives eight barbs from Barbary, four in front and four behind, and is said to be pretty fast on the road—to ruin. He is the delight of all eyes.

And here is—but my arm trembles, and my ink falls me in describing so much gorgeousness, and if you can borrow enough money to come down here and see for yourself, do so; bring a pair of green goggles and a lunch, and if your bosoms be not filled with so much wonder that you will cough your toe-nails up, you can call me a liar in Dutch, and settle your own doctor-bills.

Honestly, there are more men-of-war's names on the hotel registers here than you can ever hope to find on the scrolls of Fame; they seem to prefer to leave their names on the registers. Verily if this place should be washed overboard in the next storm, there would be a great reduction in the Army Bills.

There is plenty of bathing room here, as it extends clear out to the Eastern continent; however, most people prefer remaining closer to shore, so if accident should befall them they may go down in sight of their native land.

The sight is quite interesting. Hundreds of bathers, in a costume which is about the last relic we have of ancient mythology, and with the least possible show of being human beings, sporting in the waves like so many seals in a hungry Esquimaux dream! Old oldness and youth, beauty and its opposite, standing on the same footing, and I may add the footing is not always sure.

About the saddest thing a person can see is a wet angel; it is a damper to romance. The enchantment seems to work off as it were, and the interest drowns.

I humiliated myself this morning in that classical costume of Central Africa, and started to wade. The only objection I have to bathing is that you are so liable to get wet, and then in such a wet place as the sea it is dangerous. I am compelled to admit that a wash-pan is much safer. Well, presently a breaker rolled over me and nearly broke my neck. I tried to swallow it, but choked short off before I got three buckets down, and began a series of summersaults under water that would have made a forty-horse grindstone dizzy to look at me. I was under water fifteen minutes and a half—though if my honor was at stake I wouldn't discount this statement more than a quarter of an hour.

I only prayed that I might be allowed the privilege of going first to my hotel and writing my will; but at last I came up in the midst of two ladies somewhat water-soaked, and frightened them so badly that one of them fainted for both, and in my excitement I buried out and ran six squares for a tumbler of water to throw in her face, but when I got back I found that she had gone to bed. I addressed her with a princely apology and then went and dressed myself. My head roars all the time, and I think I

have water on the brain, though some of my friends say that thing would be impossible for certain good reasons. They ought to know. If I was home now I would hardly be troubled with colporters and organ-excruciators, for I am out of hearing.

I have spent the balance of the day in computing what it would cost a small family to live economically here one season, but I have no more room on the walls for figures, and have exhausted the entire interest on the public debt, and have only got through the little article of wardrobe. You can not expect to cut a big figure here unless there are similar figures in your income. It goes a little hard with me to keep up—I mean down—my paltry expenses, although I represent \$,000,000!

Ah revoir,
WASHINGTON WHITEHORN.

HINTS TO YOUNG WRITERS.

If young writers would examine their productions with the same critical eye with which a fastidious public examines them, they would be strangers to much of the disappointment which it falls to their lot to undergo. But the innate selfishness and self-satisfaction of our nature often precludes this. We look, as it were, through a cloud of faults, which we ignore, to a few rambling and commonplace beauties beyond. Now, to attain that command of oneself, as to permit of rigid self-criticism, we must look into, think over, and compare the productions of others with others, as well as with our own. Our aim should be, by a careful weighing of all we read, to do the same when we sit down to write. I have used the word "we," for the advice is generally useful, and such as all should bear in mind, wherever "self" comes under consideration.

Remember that he who most impartially surveys his own literary attempts, is he who, by abnegation of self, by the separation of the writer from that written, and by an habitual habit of pruning, and by rejecting that which on second sight offends by its want of worth, is he who is most likely to attain by the swiftest strides to literary celebrity.

Macaulay, whose strong, beautiful style we admire so much, saw many faults in what he considered the verbosity of language in his essay on Milton.

Burns, the lyric bard of Scotland, was a most impartial self-critic. This is what he says himself:

"To know myself had been all along my constant study. I weighed myself alone; I balanced myself with others; I evoked every means of information, to see how much ground I occupied as a man and as a poet; I studied assiduously Nature's design in my formation—where the lights and shades in my character were intended."

These are the words of perhaps the sweetest lyric bard who has ever sung the songs of love on the lyre of the human heart. Reader, if you are a writer, if you wish to attain to literary fame, follow in the track of those whose names live in the hearts of their admiring descendants; and examine your attempts with the same impartial eye with which you look for faults in those of others.

It is not so much that young writers can not impartially criticize their own productions, as that they are too short-sighted; and become so absorbed in their imagined excellence as to forget that there is such a thing as undergoing the ordeal of self-criticism, when an hour of sober thought, of careful self-examination, would do them more good than a week of continued and careless writing. Remember, then, to look to the past; to examine others; to examine yourself; to reject the chaff, and thoroughly purge the wheat from all impurities, that you, with "Nil Desperandum" as your watchword, may climb unwearied the hill of Fame.

EXCELSIOR.

RANDOM NOTES.

A MAN may live till he gets as far on the other side of seventy as he was ever on this side of it, before he can prove to me that a man who dies from liquor has not gone off in a deceiver.

GREAT men are generally poor, and I think the reason is that fame is famine with only the last syllable out: and many poets would make better pome-ade than pomes.

"I HAVE learned to take cheerfully every thing I can not avoid," said the toper, taking his "morning's morning."

I LIKE to see a man honest in his beliefs, except when his beliefs are derogatory to me.

It is good to offer good advice, but the trouble with me is that I give it all away and keep none myself.

PROMISES should be put on ice this hot weather or they will spoil.

If clarity is a mantle, then is not a little clarity a mantle-piece.

NECESSITY knows no law, but many lawyers.

ON, and truth will get uppermost at last, but coal-oil now is higher than truth.

AVOID running into debt; that is the only way you can get some men to run.

A WILLING mind makes a light foot, but a willing mouth makes a light head.

SPEAK the truth and shame the devil; but some men hate to hurt his feelings so.

MANY a man's lot is bad, but Sodom's lot was good.

JOE KING.

THE PIONEER RAILROAD.

BY LUTHER H. MOSE.

A low deep sound through the prairies found
The home of the pioneer.
The boys stood still, and their pulses thrill,
As they catch the sound more clear.
"Hark! do you hear? every day more near
They are coming," the eldest said.
"And I know some day, they will come this way.
The cars with their iron tread."
But the old man's eye sought the cloudless sky,
As swifter he worked away:
"Ah! I hear it—'t will rain, I fear,
Ere we gather the new-mown hay.
Rail-cars! well, well, who ever can tell
Where a boy's thoughts will not stray?
But when gold shall glow where the wild-flowers
blow,
Will we look for the cars this way?"

What sound on the breeze! Is't the hum of bees
That afar in the sunshine roam?
And the ringing bell—does it only tell
Of the cattle hurrying home?
As the smoke-clouds high, 'gainst the glowing sky
Their banner of darkness fling,
Do we hasten once more, as in days of yore,
To battle the fierce Fire King?

Nay—the glad shout we hear, from far and from
near,
Wide over the echoes plains,
"Oh, prairies so vast, ye are vassals at last—
To-day we revict your chains!"

Who can trace to-day each olden roadway,
That crept through the prairies wide,
Where the grass grew green the pathways between,
And wild rose-hedges beside?
Where the wood-wolf gray would pause on the
way
To his far-off woodland den,
And we laughed to see—then children were we
Who are scarce yet women and men.

For many a year, oh sage pioneer,
Your meadows have blossomed with gold,
And wealth has grown where wild flowers bloomed
fair
In the pioneer days of old.
Yes, drowsing off in the sun, 'tis soft,
With the noontide drawing near,
As of old a pioneer, that he is not yet
As of old a pioneer,

When with iron tread the cars are sped,
He will think of the long-gone day,
And mutter again of the coming rain,
And his fears for the new-mown hay.
When nearer come the hurry and hum,
On the freshening evening breeze,
It will only seem in his far-off dream,
The hum of the birds and bees.
When the engine's screams break his midnight
dreams
He will wake with the old affright,
And murmur low, as in years ago,
"Fierce howls the hungry wolf to-night!"

City Life Sketches.

LUCY,

The Strawberry-Girl.

BY MRS. SARAH E. LEAVITT.

"STRAWBERRIES!" The voice was unusually musical and attractive, and as Mr. and Mrs. Canfield were stepping into their neat little buggy, followed by a clerk with his armful of bundles and packages, the lady turned her head, saying:
"Oh, Charles, I declare! I promised David a feast of strawberries to-night, and I had quite forgotten it. Do call that child back and let us look at her fruit!"

As Mr. Canfield touched the arm of the slender little creature who was pursuing her way up the street on the look-out for customers, she was so startled that she almost dropped her basket. Turning her pretty face, all flushed with fright, upon him, she encountered a smile of genuine admiration and sympathy.

"Don't be alarmed, child," said he, kindly; "I only want to look at your strawberries; or, rather, my wife does. Come with me to the carriage, and show them to her."

"They are fine berries, Charles!" said Mrs. Canfield, approvingly, as she critically examined the fruit. "Lady-fingers, too, that are almost sweet enough without sugar. I'll take these. But stay, you'll have to buy me a basket."

"I'll tell you what, my dear," said Mr. Canfield, regarding the little girl with fatherly interest. "You'd like a ride, wouldn't you? and a nice bouquet of my flowers?" smiling benevolently as he caught the sparkle of the pretty black eyes, at his suggestion. "Jump in then; here's a cushion for you to sit on at our feet. And you shall have a nice supper into the bargain, for I'll warrant you're tired and hungry after your tramp, and I'll pay your fare back in the cars. Then I won't have to buy a new basket, you know." And the good man tipped a cunning wink at his annoyed wife.

"Oh, Charles," whispered she, for she was a lady who never could bear to disturb routines—"the idea!"

"A very good idea," he answered, sotto voce, with cheerful decision. Mrs. Canfield called her husband eccentric, and inwardly chafed a good deal under what she considered his unreasonable oddities. But she knew that it would be of no use to protest—always good-natured, he was likewise very immovable. So, Mrs. Canfield, repressing a gentle sigh, resignedly folded her camel's-hair shawl about her shoulders, and prepared to brave the wonder of Mrs. Smith and Mrs. Brown, when they should see "that commonly-dressed little creature" ensconced so familiarly in their carriage.

"What is your name, my dear?" asked Mr. Canfield, after he had for a time silently watched the evident pleasure of the child in her ride.

"Lucy Barney, sir," said the little creature, lifting a pair of the most confiding black eyes to his face, and smiling so as to show as pretty a contrast between red and white, as teeth and lips ever afforded. There was something about the smile that affected Mr. Canfield like a memory. "Strange!" he said, to himself, "how human faces will often accidentally wear the same peculiar expression!"

He went on with his questioning. It must be remembered that Mr. Canfield was a lawyer, and accustomed to examine witnesses.

"Do you live with your parents, my dear?" A curious shade passed over the pretty face. It was a sort of mixture of pain and doubt.

"Yes," she said, hesitatingly; "that is, I live with my adopted parents. I believe I have no parents of my own."

"Have you any idea who your own pa-

rents were?" asked Mr. Canfield, much interested.

"I do not remember them," said the child, reflectively. "I believe my father was a soldier, at least I have heard so from some of our neighbors. Mamma, that is, Mrs. Barney, never likes to talk about it. I asked her what my father's name was one day, and she seemed hurt; and told me that I was her child, that my mother gave me to her on her deathbed when I was a tiny baby, and that she did not wish me to know any other name till I was old enough to choose which I should take. And, indeed, she loves me dearly," said the child, gravely, "and I love her—only—I never can feel that she is really my mother. We are very poor, and I have to help her to get a living, but I don't mind that; but I would like to go to school as other girls do, and learn all kinds of things!"

Two bright round tears leaped to the child's eyes at this thought, but they were resolutely brushed away, with the remark: "But I'm not going to cry about it. Maybe I'll learn something one of these days, when mamma and I can save money enough!"

"Where do you get your strawberries?" asked Mrs. Canfield, who was also becoming interested.

"Some of them we raise ourselves, and some we buy in the market."

"And how is it that Mrs. Barney is so poor if she has a husband?" Mrs. Canfield's ideas of a man's duty in providing for his house, were of the most uncompromising order.

"Oh, he's sick!" answered Lucy—"sick with consumption. He's real good to me, and I like him ever so much. He taught me to read and write, and he says he will teach me French when I can afford to buy a grammar. He knows a great many things, but he's getting too weak to teach me much now. Oh, I wish I could learn French and music, and be a lady when I grow up!" and the black eyes sparkled like gems at the thought.

"Such ideas in a poor child's head!" whispered Mrs. Canfield. "They're ridiculous, and will be the ruin of her!"

Mr. Canfield gave his wife a comical look as they drove up to the door of their neat villa-like house and prepared to alight from the buggy. "Here, Dodo, here's a bundle for you!" he said, laughing, as a handsome blue-eyed lad of fifteen—the very picture of his father, approached the carriage; and, lifting the slender child, he tossed her into the outstretched arms of the boy, who blushed

to cast him off on my account, and he married me privately. You will love her, for you have a good heart."

And so the poor young mother had died, and Mrs. Barney had faithfully followed her instructions; and had become so fond of her foster-child, that when Mr. Canfield came to break to her the news that Lucy was heiress to a fortune of considerable value, she must be educated to fit her for the enjoyment of it, the poor lady was almost broken-hearted. But, she was too generous to wish to stand in the way of Lucy's good fortune, and gave herself, heart and soul, to the task of fitting her out for a boarding-school, where the dearest wish of the child's heart could be realized, viz: "to be educated and grow up a lady."

Mrs. Canfield was now in her element. She felt that nothing could be more "proper," now, than for her to interest herself in the progress and prospects of the young and pretty heiress. And when, after her boarding-school course was over, and the "lovely and accomplished Miss Barry" came to her house as a guest, she was nothing loth to find that her son, now a partner in his father's firm, had embraced the opportunity to woo and win the dark-eyed *ci-devant* STRAWBERRY-GIRL.

What a Letter Did.

BY FANNY ELLIOTT.

"THE idea! why, Mrs. Rosefield, it is simply absurd! simply absurd!"

And Miss Tryphena Parr repeated the words in the most indignant manner of which she was capable.

"No, I am right, as you will learn. I saw them together only an hour ago, and Lullie's little sister told my Wannie that Doctor Grace was coming to-night in his carriage to take Lullie to Moonlight Lake."

Mrs. Rosefield was a neat little body, and as she sat there, in Miss Tryphena's easy-chair, in her dove-colored lawn dress and white ruffled apron, her placid brown eyes and scant gray brown hair, the half-exasperated spinster frowned down on her to think she dare thus openly contradict her.

"What do you expect I care for her little sister, or your Wannie either, for that matter? I tell you, Mrs. Rosefield, that Lullie Demorest and young Doctor Grace are *not* engaged; and what's more, they never will be!"



WHAT A LETTER DID.

ed as he received his pretty burden, apparently as unconscious of her inferiority as his father was.

"Now, wife, a stronger pair of arms will be needed for you!" and he held out his arms toward as fine-looking a specimen of womanhood as ever weighed one hundred and seventy avoirdupois.

Notwithstanding that she inwardly fumed at her husband's utter defiance of the proprieties, Mrs. Canfield was very kind to the little strawberry-girl. Indeed, her artless beauty could scarcely have failed to reach any matron's heart, however protected by conventionalities. So the child was sent away, well-fed and happy, with her basket filled with old books of David's, among which were included the coveted French grammar. And truth compels us to express the fear that she also carried off a portion of Dodo's boyish heart.

As Mr. Canfield entered his office the next morning, his partner met him with news in his face.

"We have just made a discovery," he said, "which complicates the affairs of the late Lieutenant Barry, considerably. Papers have been found in a secret drawer of his private *eschewaire* that reveal the fact that at the time of his death he was married, and expected to become a father. So there may be a widow and child to contest the claims of his heirs. Here is a bundle of love-letters," handing out a package of delicate missives, tied with a blue ribbon—"and here is a photograph which shows that whatever else the lieutenant might have been deficient in, it certainly was not taste."

Mr. Canfield took the photograph in his hand, and started, as he examined it, with the exclamation, "Good Heavens! how strangely events do come about, eh? If I didn't see Lieutenant Barry's child, yesterday, I've no eyes in my head, that's all! She's the very picture of her father and mother both!" And seizing his hat he rushed from the office in such haste as to give his partner serious fears for his sanity.

On questioning Mrs. Barry, Mr. Canfield discovered that Lucy's mother had come to her for the purpose of being nursed through her confinement; that she had died of grief after the news of her husband's death in battle; and that she had consigned her infant to Mrs. Barney's care, as the only friend she had in the world. "Do not let her go to any of her father's relatives," she had said, dying; "they will treat her as they have treated me. It was too much for my pride that Lieutenant Barry should wish to marry a poor governess, so they threatened

among her 'gifts,' and a desire to avoid offense by laughing at her hostess prevented her from so doing. So she quietly folded up her knitting, and donned the starched brown-ingham sun-bonnet.

"Well, Miss Phenie, it *does* seem as if the doctor and Lullie were mated in Heaven, as the saying is. Howsoever, it'll all end right, I guess. There comes Peter, now, to supper. Good-afternoon, Miss Phenie; come over right soon and take tea with me."

Miss Tryphena watched the little woman tripping along to meet the father, who, with a laughing youngster on either side, was returning to supper.

"It does look nice to see married folks, I declare," murmured solitary Miss Phenie. "And although Lullie Demorest *may* be better matched to him, as Mrs. Rosefield said, it'll be a curious thing if I lose him! Come, Ann, get our supper early."

The supper was just over at the Demorest mansion, and up in her room, where the June sunset came streaming in quivering, golden lanes over the cool matting to her feet, Lullie Demorest was standing before her dressing-table.

She was a tall, queenly girl, with purple shades in her black hair, and purple tints in her dark violet eyes. She was sweet in her youthful freshness, and the glad smiles of delight left bewitching dimples in either peachy cheek.

She was a universal favorite, not only among her lady friends, but with her gentleman acquaintances; and many were the envious glances sent after the handsome young physician as he drove pretty Lullie Demorest out in his stylish carriage.

Tonight Lullie was looking her very prettiest; a trailing dress of white pique, with a scarlet sash, and coral jewelry—nothing very elegant or fashionable, but bewitchingly charming, because she wore it.

She had completed her toilette, and was waiting for Doctor Grace to call, when his colored office-boy rung the bell, and left a note.

Not a little surprised she opened it; and as she read it—it was short—a glow of anger and mortification spread over her pretty face.

"Fie! he is so good as to excuse me from making the promised call on you this evening; and pardon me for suggesting that, unless particularly necessary I will not visit you again."

"Respectfully,"

CLIFFORD GRACE."

The hot tears rushed to her eyes, and she flung the daintily-worded little note away.

ready for your dear finger. I can't even imagine how I'd feel to have taken it home again."

He pointed to the inside. It was engraved: "Lynn Winwood to Lullie Demorest."

She smiled; somehow she felt an unusual flow of spirits coming to her.

"You were confident. Put it on for me, Lynn."

He slipped it over her finger, and then kissed her.

And she rode on, Lynn Winwood's betrothed bride!

The lonesome supper-table at Miss Parr's had just been cleared away, and the lady herself was sitting on the little side "stoop," when a little colored boy opened the gate and handed her a letter.

Her susceptible heart was all up in arms in a second; and with radiant face she greeted the little "Messenger of Cupid."

"Well, Cato, my boy, you've brought me a letter from the doctor, hey?"

She took it, and retired to her bedroom to read it. The very first words sent a thrill of ecstasy over her that she grabbed the arm of her Boston rocker, in a transport of delight.

"Now, what'll Miss Rosefield say; her, and them stuck-up Demorests? Now, what'll sassy Miss Lullie do, when she hears the news?"

And after indulging in another long smell of the delicate spray of white rosebuds that accompanied the letter—in a little box, lined with silver lace paper—she turned again to the letter.

"MY DARLING—MY DARLING:

"Never, until to-night, have I dared open my heart to you. Not that I dreaded you would trample on the wealth of love there—for your every look and action tells me I am loved even as I love; but because I did not desire to ask you to be a poor man's wife. To-day, my sweet one, I have learned the glorious news—glorious because it will enable me to make you so happy—that I am the heir to nearly fifty thousand dollars; and the first thing I do is to ask you to share it. Oh, darling, why is it I am so hopeful? I think I should die were you to reject me. And that I may learn your answer at the first glance I shall have of you, you will wear your white dress and those white roses at the strawberry festival, tonight? I would call for you, but I can not possibly. I will meet you there, however, and we will have a happy ride home."

"A thousand kisses, my darling, from

your lover,

"CLIFFORD."

"P. S.—I write this from the sea-shore, whither I was called suddenly by a pitiful accident. Cato will bring the flowers from the office."

"A white dress! indeed, I'll wear it—unless it hasn't shrunk too short. Ann! fetch my white dainty frock."

It was rather "shrunk," but, by dint of coaxing, Miss Phenie managed to squeeze into it. Then she arranged her scanty hair, and fastened the fragrant love-gauge as stiffly as she could. A pair of almost defunct white kid gloves completed her attire; and she started for the old hall, with Doctor Grace's love-letter in her bosom.

Fairest among the fair was Lullie Demorest as she walked up and down the long festival hall, leaning on Lynn Winwood's arm; her eyes bright as twin stars, her cheeks glowing with unnatural excitement.

"Here comes your especial friend, Doctor Grace," said Lynn, as the young physician came slowly through the crowd, with a nod here, and a smile there.

Her heart gave a great bound, and the room seemed suddenly turning floor upward; and then she bowed gravely, coldly, indifferently.

He had suddenly met her, and as suddenly stood perfectly still, his eyes fastened on her icy features. Then a deathly pallor spread over his face.

"Lullie—Miss Demorest—I—I am so surprised—I—"

"Mr. Winwood, Doctor Grace," and she cut short his embarrassment by the almost imperiously given introduction.

The gentlemen bowed; then, while Lynn was looking across the hall, Lullie took her ring from her finger.

"Isn't it pretty?"

She spoke gayly, happily, as she pointed to the names inside. "You must congratulate me."

He read and reread the two names inside; then, without a word, returned it, and moved away.

"Lullie, who ever is that coming—there, just by the ice-cream bower, see, all arrayed in white?"

Lynn pointed to the spot.

"Oh, Miss Parr; she is very eccentric. Shall we go for some cream, too?"

Together they entered the bower, and took seats just as Miss Parr entered.

The stalls were divided off for two; thus affording cosy little places for a *tertio-letto*.

They heard Miss Parr send for Dr. Grace.

"Tell him a lady wishes him in the bower."

Lullie shivered a little as she heard him enter; and then—we will not anticipate.

"Oh, Clifford, my own true love, I am here. I accept you; here is my hand, forever."

Dr. Grace stepped back in amazement.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Parr. What do you mean?"

"What do you mean to call me 'Miss Parr,' after sending me that passionate love-letter? Clifford—my own Clifford, forever!"

"Madam, this is disgusting. Explain yourself. What passionate love-letter do you refer to—Gracious Heaven! you are dressed in white, and you have my roses in your hair!"

The words came leaping from his lips.

"Of course I have; and here, on my faithful bosom, is the letter itself!"

She handed it to him. He fairly snatched it from her.

"I sent you a note this afternoon, stating I wished to be excused from calling according to your invitation, and telling you I'd not call professionally again unless your servant grew worse, so as to make it necessary. This letter, madam, never was intended for your eye, or those blossoms for your hair."

Miss Phenie stared with open eyes.

"Then I'll sue you and have satisfaction out of that fortune o' yours. Look out, sir!"

Towering with rage, she strode from the room, and out a rear door to her house. Dr. Grace sat down at the table, pale and gloomy; he knew he had lost Lullie, he now understood her coolness, and his heart ached on in a bitter agony; and then—

A hand fell lightly on his; he glanced up; it was the gentleman who had brought Lullie.

"Come with me a moment, Dr. Grace."

Lynn Winwood's eyes were grave and piteous, and his face sternly still.

Together they entered Lullie's presence.

Pale, shivering, her eyes bright as coals, she sat there.

"Dr. Grace, I have won her for my own; I love her better than life; and yet, I say,

you shall have her. We heard your conversation with the lady, and now Lulie learns—too late, she feared that her life happiness was forever wrecked. But I love her too well to stand between you. Hard as the task is to give her, it would be worse to claim her when she loves you so. Take her, Dr. Grace."

His voice was calm and low, and he laid Lulie's hand in the young physician's; "Lulie, there is the letter intended for you. By a well-nigh fatal blunder it was placed in the wrong envelope. Read it, Lulie. I will await my answer."

Side by side the young men stood, watching her sweet face as she read; now blushing, now paling. Then she glanced at Dr. Grace; a fond, trustful look it was. Then she turned to Lynn, with her beseeching, troubled eyes.

"I don't want you to think of me, Lulie, cousin Lulie. To-night has been the happiest of my life. I will thank God for it, without fretting for more. Accept my truest good wishes for yourselves, forever."

He walked gently away, and neither Clifford or Lulie saw the spasm of keen agony that corrugated his forehead.

"Lulie, my darling, you accept me?"

"If you'll take me as a gift from poor, noble Lynn."

Then Lynn returned, and the trio joined the crowd again, and none ever was the wiser of the trouble a love-letter brought.

The Shadowed Heart:

OR,
THE ILL-STARRED MARRIAGE.

BY MARY REED CROWELL.

AUTHOR OF "THE IRON MASK," "SCARLET CRESCENT," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXIV.

TWELVE O'CLOCK.

THAT succeeding morning passed all too slowly to Maude Elvorton, whose thoughts went forward with bounding anticipations to the moment when her lover should tell her again and more freely of his love for her.

A blissful light beamed in her eyes, and her voice was soft and low when she spoke. Her parents knew that she had released Casselmaine, and they at first objected strongly. But George's persuasions, united with her own request, received their reward, and she heard from her father's lips that he sanctioned the annulment of the engagement.

Mrs. Elvorton was more displeased than her husband, and openly asked Maude if her preference for Frederic Trevlyn had not caused this disruption.

Maude candidly confessed, though with blushes and hesitancy, that she did love Trevlyn, but that, had she not assured herself of Casselmaine's indifference to her, she should never have withdrawn.

"And if Mr. Trevlyn doesn't care for you, what will you do?" Mrs. Elvorton interrogated her cruelly.

"He does return—he does care for me. He told me yesterday; and this morning at twelve he calls to see me."

A satisfied smile curled Mrs. Elvorton's haughty lip, and she turned away from her daughter, who, with fast-throbbing heart, awaited her lover's coming.

At that very moment Frederic Trevlyn was bending over a letter he had just written, in which the ink was still wet and fresh.

Before him lay scattered many letters and notes, which from time to time he consulted; then, when he had read, began his writing again. It was a long, long letter, which he wrote, and his face indicated the passage of varied emotions through his soul as he penned each line.

At times an expression of intensest agony contracted his features; then, that was quickly followed by a proud, defiant smile, to be as rapidly succeeded by a stern look of duty—duty that he felt he must perform, would perform in spite of any human power.

After he wrote, he read his letter. Half through, he tore the sheet into a dozen pieces.

On a fresh sheet he transcribed a line, signed his name, and thrust the sheet into the envelope, hastily and wildly, as if he feared he would repent.

He called William and directed him to post the letter immediately.

That dispatched, he rung for Mrs. Holcombe.

"Are the rooms in readiness, the western suite?"

"Every thing is in perfect order, sir, and I think you'll be pleased with my arrangement. Will you step up-stairs and see the rooms?"

"No—no," he replied, hesitatingly; "I think there is no occasion for that. But I wish to ask a favor of you. If company comes to the Archery—a lady—will you exert yourself to the utmost to make her happy and contented?"

Mrs. Holcombe answered by a glance, half-aggravated, half-wondering.

"I know you always do make every thing pleasant for those around you, and I only ventured to mention this to you, because if any one comes, her position will be a very peculiar one."

"Mr. Trevlyn, if it is your wife you are going to marry and bring home, no woman should be happier, and no one will serve her more faithfully than I."

A tear gathered under her spectacles, but she forgot to brush it away, in her amazement at Frederic's conduct.

While she was speaking, a vivid blush had arisen to his cheeks, and he seemed ill at ease. A sudden idea inspired Mrs. Holcombe.

"My dear Mr. Trevlyn, I am old enough to be your mother, therefore I hope you will take what I say as an act of kindness. Were you my son, I would do just what I am doing now, and ask just what I am going to ask now."

She came up closely to him, and laid her hand lovingly on his head.

"My boy, is it a wife, a good, true wife you are going to bring?"

A groan burst from his pale lips as she ceased.

"Because, my dear Mr. Frederic, if you are going to dishonor yourself, your home, your servant, I can not remain here to witness it."

He caught her hand and laid it against his hot forehead.

"Mrs. Holcombe, your honor and mine will receive no stain from the guest who shall demand our courtesy. She will please you, you will love her. I—oh, Mrs. Holcombe, if you but dreamed of the constant darkness I walk in, you would pity me—yes, you would weep over me, as a mother for her heart-broken son."

A great racking sob burst from his white lips, and then he released her hand.

"To-day I must be away at dinner-time. To-morrow the lady will be with us; then I will explain more fully. Trust me, Mrs. Holcombe, trust me and bless me, and pray for me."

She murmured a broken benediction as he bowed his proud head before her, and then softly left him alone.

He gathered up his scattered papers, and arranged the disordered furniture. Then he lifted the gray velvet curtain and entered his mysterious retreat.

At first no sound broke the stillness; then a stifled moan came faintly from the darkness, and his voice, laden with anguish, fell mournfully on the still noon-air.

"Our merciful Father, strengthen me, assist me in this hour of deepest trial! enable me to sacrifice all for duty, all for right! and though I relinquish her who would have been—who *is*—God forgive me, the light of my life, let me believe it is all for the best. When I waver in my sacrifice, oh, be merciful and sustain me! When I grope on in the darkness, be Thou my light! and when grief and sorrow shall mingle in my bitter cup, let me remember Thy hands hold it to my lips, and may I drain it even to the dregs!"

His tones died away, like the moaning of the autumn winds, and all was silent again, but only for a time.

"Strengthen her, my heart's idol—strengthen her for the load this day to fall on her heart with its crushing weight. Enable her to say, 'Thy will be done!' Bless us all, and remember *another, another*, and may I be prepared to do my duty to her."

He ceased, and for several minutes he was silent again. Then the curtain parted, and he came forth, pale but composed.

The carriage, agreeably to his orders, was at the door. He took the lines himself, and drove slowly to the Grange.

He was shown into the parlor, where, before he had seated himself, Maude entered, beautiful and bewildering, her starry eyes charged with the love-light of her full heart.

"You returned safely, then, yesterday afternoon?"

He knew he must say something, yet he dreaded to speak the most commonplace remark.

"Oh, yes, Mr. Trevlyn; and you, since then, have been well, and—" she hesitated, blushed, then added—"happy?"

A spasm of pain crossed his fine face, but he met the occasion she offered of striking his own death-blow to hopes and joys.

"Maude," he said, in a hollow tone that startled himself, while she started in surprise at the sound, while an undefinable fear curdled her blood and drove the carnation from her cheeks.

He gazed upon her sweet face, while his eyes dimmed with manly tears as he thought of the revelation that hour would make. He felt that he could die to save her the pangs he must cause, and yet his own rashness had placed him on the ground they now occupied.

His brain grew fiercely hot, his heart beat in frightful rapidity, while he eagerly read her pale, startled face; then, by a mighty effort, he calmed himself sufficiently to speak.

"Come and sit down, Maude, and listen to what I must say: what you must hear even if it kills us both."

He drew her unresisting form to the sofa, and then he began:

"Yesterday I told you I loved you, Maude. To-day I come to ask you to forget I ever said it. No, you must not misconstrue my meaning," he added, quickly and vehemently, as a proud light gleamed in her eyes, and she drew her skirts from his feet.

"No, no; the truth is none the less—the love is none the less, yet, Maude, I, the most pitiable man in God's universe, am here to beg you to forget those words, and if you can, forgive the speaker."

He brushed the great drops of perspiration from his forehead, and paused for her

to speak. But she sat calm and silent, looking him full in the face.

"Don't look so, Maude; don't regard me so sternly. When you understand it all you will pity me, not hate me."

But she did not remove her eyes, for she could not, but a softer, tenderer expression crept into their dark depths.

"Frederic, what do you mean—are you afraid I regret your confession?"

"No, no," he returned, mildly. "Would that you did; but oh, Maude, when I spoke those words I must have been beside myself. I had no right to speak them, I ought to have been stricken dumb before my lips framed them. But the temptation overwhelmed me, and I did what I to-day suffer for—what you will suffer for. But you will forgive me, won't you?"

His pleading, passionate eyes looked eagerly in hers.

"I feel bewildered; I can not understand what this all means, Frederic. If you think I do not love you, you are wrong; my love for you is the one dream of my life. But if you do not care for me—why—then—"

Her lips quivered, and a tear fell on his face.

"Maude, Maude, you will drive me crazy," he whispered, hoarsely, his white lips trembling so he could hardly speak. "Yesterday I told you, defying the honor that should have restrained me, that I loved you. But harder than any thing I ever did, or can do, is it to-day, to tell you—oh, merciful Father—must I give her up?—yes, Maude, my lost Maude, I can not accept that love—you must not be my wife."

He had spoken at last, and with a faint cry, Maude reached forth her hands imploringly.

"Why, why, oh, Frederic, will you not let me love you and be your wife?"

Her bosom heaved with the confined grief, and her eyes glared with unshed tears.

He put her hands gently down.

"Listen, Maude," he answered, quietly, though every word seemed a drop of blood oozing from his wounded heart; "can you not guess what is the reason I am killing our hearts?"

Slowly she drooped her head on her bosom; slowly the warmth left the little hand that just touched his own.

"Maude, shall I, may I, dare I tell you?"

She murmured an inarticulate whisper, and he, in the mighty love he was so earnestly striving to smother, thought he would rather die, then and there, than cut the last cord that bound him to her, than speak this last word, which, when spoken, effectually and forever divided them, and sent them both drifting apart—further—further.

"I know the stab I inflict, my poor Maude, but, listen, listen, and may a merciful Savior sanctify the cross to us—to you, my trusting, innocent one. Maude, I am married!"

For a moment she sat, stiff, upright; then, slowly, mechanically, she arose, and pressed her cold, quivering lips for one moment on his own. He did not return the pressure, he dared not; then she lifted his chin with her cold hands, and for a moment steadily regarded his face.

With that last, lingering, touching glance she went quietly from the room, and Frederic Trevlyn, as sadly, as silently, went from the house.

His self-appointed task was done, and he knew God would reward them both one day.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE SECRET OF THE CHAMBER.

THE guests had all departed from the Arch street mansion; the lights were extinguished, and Clare Trevlyn and Esther were alone in the chamber of the former.

Clare seemed almost frenzied at something; her eyes were swollen with tears, and at times they darted rays of glowing fire. Now she was pacing the floor of the long room, her elegant evening dress trailing on the velvet covering under her feet.

On her graceful person the diamonds gleamed and glittered, but she was regardless of their splendor. She who, but a few hours before, had proudly smiled at her own loveliness, now bowed her royal head in misery and despair.

"Esther, Esther, to think my first attempt toward winning his love should have been the time when I first learned of his treachery. Oh, why do I speak thus? I will not believe it. Esther, do you believe it?"

Esther laughed scornfully.

"Why shouldn't I? haven't I always insisted that Frederic Trevlyn was a villain, since the days he refused to credit your innocence? Of course I believe it, fully and entirely, and you do, too."

Her voice softened as she finished, for a woeful mournfulness clouded Clare's face.

"Be my adviser, dear Esther. Not my cross, prejudiced housekeeper, but my mother's dutiful adopted child, my loving foster-sister, again. Speak gently, please, Esther, and tell me what to do."

Her tearful, pleading eyes were fixed in mute appeal on her companion's hard, stony face.

"If you do not believe that Mr. Casselmaine has told you the truth, most certainly I advise you to travel at once to the Archery and see for yourself if your husband is paying his addresses to this young lady."

"Mr. Casselmaine is a real gentleman,

and seemed deeply grieved when he learned I was Frederic's wife. He was very much startled, and when he asked me for a private interview I felt a presentiment that something was going to happen. But I little dreamed *what* it was." Her unrestrained tears leaped forth again in torrents of grief.

"Don't cry, my little Clare, my dear little sister. It will all come right eventually, depend upon it, and even if it doesn't, let the thought comfort you that you are sinned against, and not sinning."

"But it wounds me so deeply, Esther; it causes a feeling I can't describe to come all over me, when I imagine Fred, my Fred, my darling, kissing some other woman; telling some other woman he loves her better than life itself! Oh, Esther, when we were betrothed he was so tender and gentle and loving, and I know just how he would do again."

Her pitiful sobs shook her frame fearfully.

"Clare, you must not grieve so. You will cry yourself sick. Let me prepare you some valerian, for you are entirely too nervous."

Esther spoke commandingly, as she arose to prepare the quieting draught.

"I need no valerian; I need comfort and sympathy. Sit down, Esther, and let me talk more to you."

"To-night we will rest; to-morrow you must help me pack my trunk, for I shall go to New York. Esther," she added, abruptly, clasping and unclasping her restless fingers, "do you think I can win him back? had I better confront him, or see the lady, or merely watch them secretly, until I am satisfied?"

"I can not tell. You can decide that point better after you reach the neighborhood."

Clare removed her jewels and the costly silk dress, that had been the admiration of so many guests that night, and in her night-wrapper sought her couch for a little rest.

The sun was shining brightly when she awoke from a deep, troubled sleep, and she sprang, bewildered, to her feet, vainly trying to recall the events of the past night.

Suddenly they came appallingly plain to her, and she covered her face with her hands, and a half-hour passed before she could regain the composure necessary for the duties of the day. Esther was then summoned, and all day long the two women labored over preparations for a journey and absence which might extend to many weeks.

Early the next morning, ere she had left her chamber, a ring at the basement door was followed by a timid tap on her own, and one of her maids handed her a letter.

A strange sensation thrilled her as she took it, and an exclamation fell involuntarily from her lips, for it was subscribed in her husband's handwriting.

Almost frantically she tore off the envelope. The letter was very brief, and its contents ran thus:

"Mrs. Trevlyn will oblige her husband by coming immediately, on this receipt, to the Archery."

A sudden sunburst of rapturous joy shone over her face, and in an ecstasy of delight she dropped on her knees in thankful prayer.

"Esther, Esther," she called over the railing of the stairs, "come, quickly."

"See," she whispered, holding the letter up as Esther entered, "see the glorious news!"

As excited as Clare, Esther seized the note. A shadow of pain crossed her stern, homely face as she handed it back.

"I have altered my mind. I believe Mr. Casselmaine was mistaken; I believe Frederic Trevlyn is true to you."

A thankful smile looked from Clare's eyes.

"To think I am all ready to go, too," she said, merrily. "And, oh, Esther, just suppose I never come back, just only suppose he wants me to stay forever—oh, such happiness would almost kill me, I believe."

She pressed her white hands over her heart, so wildly was it beating.

"Come down for a lunch, before the carriage is ready. Come."

"I can not eat—do not ask me. I am so happy I feel that food is a superfluous necessity. Do not urge me, please, dear Esther, for I will have a grand dinner with him, perhaps, at my own table, in our house."

She sat down in the little crimson velvet rocking-chair, and cried from very excess of bliss.

Esther smoothed her hair assuringly, and gradually her emotion calmed, until, when the carriage drove up, and her trunk strapped on, she was her own bright, radiant, happy self.

Kissing Esther a merry adieu, she sprang lightly into the carriage and was driven off. She was in good time for the Kensington train for New York, and in five hours she alighted at the Jersey City depot. Crossing the ferry, she called a cab, and was driven to the Hudson River depot in Thirty-first street.

The train carried her rapidly to her destination, and a half-hour's brisk ride brought her to the station at Yonkers, from which place she would ride by coach to the Archery.

Alighting from the car, a stranger touched her on the shoulder.

"You are Mrs. Trevlyn, going to the Archery?"

She replied affirmatively, and to her surprise and heartfelt gratification, ascer-

tained that the family barouche was awaiting her.

"He loves me! he loves me!" she repeated to herself, as she noted the kindness of her husband in providing for her comfort.

The road lay through the village and up the beautiful terraced hill above, near whose summit the white walls of the Archery were gleaming in the afternoon sunshine.

As they entered the open gate, her heart bounded wildly at the thought of so soon meeting the one she so well loved. Would he welcome her warmly, would he kiss her, would she be allowed to clasp her arms around his neck once more?

The carriage stopped, and the footman assisted her to alight.

The door was open that led to the outer vestibule, and the glass doors, with their rosewood panels, low drapery and silver knobs, were ajar.

She stepped lightly, timidly: what would be her welcome? She could hear her heart beat in the solemn stillness; then she laid her hand on the door-handle.

Widely it opened by other hands than her own, and her husband reached his hand in dignified courtesy to welcome her.

She forgot etiquette, forgot his previous cruel coldness, and springing up she threw her arms about him.

"Fred, my darling, you believe me, you trust me, you love me?"

He gently disengaged her clinging arms, just as a matronly-looking lady entered the hall by the south door.

"Mrs. Holcombe, this is the lady I promised. My wife, my housekeeper. The 'Clare' you remember. Escort her to her rooms, and I will come in a half-hour."

He bowed not unkindly to Clare, who followed Mrs. Holcombe through the spacious halls and stairways to her room.

It was the room she had visited but a few weeks before.

"Please tell Mr. Trevlyn to send my trunk as soon as he finds it convenient."

Mrs. Holcombe—her kind heart full of joy that her favorite "Clare," as she declared she was ever since the day of her visit, was really and truly her young master's wife—hastened to obey the new mistress' request.

Her trunk came up immediately. From it she selected a simple white dress, and letting down her hair as she knew he used to like it best, awaited his coming.

Soon his rapid footfall sounded along the hall, and, without knocking, he entered the room.

She did not rise to greet him, but her joy shone in every line of her fair, sweet face.

He walked up to her, and smiled.

"Clare, shall we bury the past? If we can not reinstate each other in our inmost hearts, at least we will strive faithfully to forgive and forget."

She took his hand and drew him to her side, and looked into his calm, handsome face.

"As your wife, Frederic, I may say what I would not dare to, were I only a betrothed—and yet it seems very like a betrothal, this sweet, sudden reconciliation."

She blushed in spite of herself, however, as Fred smiled a faint smile.

"I have nothing to forgive, my husband, because the great love I have always borne you has palliated every thing that has occurred. But, Frederic, let me make a simple explanation, that I have never been permitted to do. May I?"

He bowed affirmatively.

"Frederic, the gentleman you saw place his arms around my neck and kiss me so warmly was my *only* brother."

An expression of thankfulness lighted his face.

"And I judged you harshly, Clare! You are loyal and true still."

"And loving," she added, laying her head on his shoulder.

He trembled, and closed his eyes a moment.

"Clare, let me confess that I have not been loyal in thought and heart, though I have been in act. I have fought and won a fearful battle, and I humbly tell you that I am but the trace of my old self. I am no longer the man who could love deeply, ardently—but a trembling, sinful one, who strives to fulfill his duty."

His voice trembled, and Clare felt the shiver that quivered through his frame as she leaned against him.

Her own face grew pallid as death.

"And you've ceased to love me, then? Oh that I had died before I heard it!"

The cry came from her stricken heart.

"Truth compels me to say it. A stern resolve to do my duty—be it ever so fearful in the performance—impels me to confess it to you. Yet, Clare, there is still a holy tie that binds us, a sweet bond of indissoluble sympathy. I never can forget, Clare, that you were the mother of my child."

A mist gathered in his eyes, and the mother's heart overflowed in a mingled passion of anguish and bliss.

"Come, Clare, a moment with me."

She accepted his proffered arm, and they descended to his sacred room.

He pointed to the vaulted recess.

"There, Clare, is my shrine. That silent little retreat contains the talisman that has, under God, saved me from sin worse than murder. When temptations so whirling that my brain reeled blew upon me, here I came, here I suffered, fought, and, thank God, conquered. Will you enter with me, and learn its secret? No mortal

eye but my own ever invaded its sanctity; but you shall enter. You have even a better right than I."

Tremblingly she suffered herself to be drawn along; he raised the gray cloud of drapery, and the two stood within the secret room.

It was a small apartment, and the wall was hung with black velvet, studded with golden stars.

But two objects occupied the room. In one corner stood an ebony table, where lay an open Bible, and beside it a silver candlestick, in which flamed faintly a waxen taper. In the center, on a low marble table, lay a tiny white coffin, simple and unpretending. With a bound, Clare sprang from Frederic's arm, and knelt beside the casket, her hot tears flowing fast and copious.

It was a baby that lay there, white and beautiful as a sleeping angel. The tiny hands were folded on the little breast, and a little bare leg, plump and marble-hard and pure, was visible.

The face was a perfect repetition of its father, save that a happy repose marked the features, where stern hauteur stamped the parent.

The thin dark hair curled carelessly over the fine head, and the long dark lashes shaded the white cheek.

Clare's sobs ceased; then she arose and looked long and eagerly on the infant's placid sleep.

"My baby—my Effie—darling!"

"Our child, Clare, is happier than either of us. When she died, two years ago, I had her tiny body embalmed, and enshrined very near me, for I felt the powerful tide of fate that was sweeping on to me. A good God has blessed the memory of our daughter to me, and to-day I can lay my hand on her sinless brow and confess all I have done."

With one arm thrown around Clare's waist, who wept silently while he spoke, and the other on their baby's white forehead, he told her all.

Not a word, not a syllable did he conceal, and when he had finished, he bent over his heart-broken wife.

"Clare, can you forgive me?"

"A thousand times, yes. Only give me a little of the olden time love, only remember sometimes I am Effie's mother, and I will try to bear it; but, Frederic, my lost husband, it will break my heart, I know."

"We will help each other on our life's journey, and in heaven, where there is no marriage or giving in marriage, we will reap the reward of our sacrifice."

He led her away, and then locked their treasure in again.

(To be continued—Commenced in No. 12.)

Cruiser Crusoe:

OR, A BOAT VOYAGE TO A TROPIC ISLE.

LIFE ON A TROPIC ISLE.

BY LAFAYETTE LAFOREST.

NUMBER TWENTY.

THE spot which in my mind's eye had been selected for the purpose of trying my hand at boat-building, was three miles from the sea, but close to a stream that ran to the shore, and was navigable all the way.

There I had observed some trees, which were likely to suit my purpose. My recollections of the misfortunes of my great predecessor prevented me from making a similar mistake. There were much better trees, and much better suited to my purpose, on other parts of the island, but then, they were far away from water.

The spot chosen by me was a small glade, close to a narrow bayou that ran into the river. Beside this was just such a tree as I wanted, though not long enough; but it was wide and straight. My first task, after fixing my camp, was to dig round the roots, at which I then began to cut with the energy of one whose life is at stake.

This took me a whole day, and then the tree did not fall; but at early dawn again my ax awoke the echoes of the forest, and about midday it fell.

The trunk part, which would have been of use to me, was about fourteen feet long; and, though my boat would have to be much larger, yet, still, I did not despair. My brains were at work, both remembering and inventing. The trunk once on the ground, the whole of the superfluous branches and wood had to be hacked off with my ax. Then the want of a good saw became visible. But, to cut a very long and wearisome story short, at the end of a week I had before me a solid trunk nearly fifteen feet long, by four wide, and as many deep, on which to commence my arduous proceedings.

The labor was fearful, but I never flinched. My meals were hurried over as much as possible. There stood the log, and I could neither eat, drink nor sleep in peace until it was turned into a canoe.

The hardest part of all proved to be flattening the upper side. This took me four days' hard consecutive work, taking off my coat, too, in earnest.

Then I began to make way. A good fire was lit at some little distance, from which I every now and then took the live coals, and so placed them on the wood of my future canoe, as to burn away the interior, while I fashioned the outside. In this way nearly all savage dug-outs are made.

For several days, while I was cutting away with extreme care and nicety, the asperities and superabundant wood, the fire process

continued until the trunk was hollowed out in a satisfactory way. But this was only in the rough, as my ax had again to come into play, to make the rude thing level.

Then by the assistance of my horse and zebra, the trunk was turned half over and supported by two thick branches, while I fashioned something of a keel.

This done, my boat being quite water-tight, though the ends were somewhat slight, my resolution was to put it on a gridiron. This is a thing used in dock-yards to clean the bottoms of vessels. My way of making it was thus:—a number of poles and bamboos were cut and laid across the bayou or creek, just about four inches above the water, and on to this the boat was dragged by my cattle, while I guided the progress of my precious treasure with a kind of rude handspike.

My object in placing it in position was to lengthen it, both at the bow and at the stern. For this purpose, the thick bark of similar trees was cut off in one solid mass, and by judicious management and coaxing, made to assume the required shape. It was then fastened to the trunk by means of bamboo dowel-pins, or wooden nails, which were let in by means of a red-hot ramrod being used for an auger. Across the bow was placed a small deck of bamboo, to consolidate the structure, other bamboos and bamboo cords being bent round outside.

The powerful stretchers were placed above the hole, in which the mast was to be slipped; these also were secured by strong bamboo dowel-pins. A seat in the stern-sheet, and a small plank to place my feet on, and my boat was complete.

No! the masterpiece of my cunning was yet to be developed. The presence of a large quantity of india-rubber vines had been one object of my selecting this spot. My gourd was now prepared and the proper incision being made, a good supply of the white milky juice was procured, with which, by the exercise of great patience, every seam, every joint, every dowel-pin, was duly paid and caulked.

My triumph was complete. I had a boat.

But now came the launch. With a view to the proper and due observance of the ceremony, I placed on board my craft some large pieces of meat cut from a deer I had killed that morning, some corn, and a gourd of brandy and water. Then a loaded gun was put in the stern-sheets, and I cleared for action. With my ax the center supports were cut away, leaving only one at each end. Then the weight of the boat brought the keel to the water's edge, after which I cut away the stern end, and the canoe was in the water on a level keel.

Frantic with joy, I cast the food to my dogs, zebra, and horse, drank a good draught of brandy and water, and leaped into the canoe.

I was afraid!

A child with its first toy, a young mother dandling her first child, a lawyer with a long-expected brief, are usually quoted as instances of perfect happiness; but who so happy and proud as I?

Here on this desert island, with but a few old tools saved from the wreck of a ship, with but scanty knowledge of the way to proceed—thank heaven, that my youth had been spent in reading—I had succeeded in building myself, without the remotest assistance, a canoe, able to bear at least six or seven people, and it appeared to me that with the cargo which one man could take with him, this admitted of my sailing round the world.

In the early days of voyage and discovery, men had traveled wondrous distances in small, rickety and frail open boats, and had thus arrived in safety at their destination.

Thus had the six hundred islands of the Pacific been peopled, that island world embosomed in a vast ocean, sweeping in latitude from pole to pole, rolling in longitude over a whole hemisphere, and exceeding in area all the continents and islands of the globe, by ten millions of miles.

Many years before any record that we have, these islands rose from the deep, and were peopled by stray Malay and other boats being carried thousands of miles out of their course. Chinese junks were known to land there human freight after being tossed a whole year on the angry billows; and then, too, I was well aware that Columbus himself had made his voyage to America in a caravel not much bigger than a barge.

How proud then I was of this my vehicle for locomotion may be imagined.

Now, however, came the reflection, that my boat had to be got down to the sea, which, without oars or rudder, was no easy matter. My animals, too, had to be taken back to the place whence they came, so that they might provide themselves with food during my absence, which might—who knows what may or what may not happen when he starts upon a journey?—be eternal.

The precious canoe was then docked in the bayou; after which, mounting my zebra, and leading my horse, which was more obedient to the yoke, and, therefore, employed as a beast of burden, I started for home, followed by my animals. The journey was delightful, but was not completed in one day, as I wished to select the proper place at the mouth of the river for fitting out my vessel finally.

The mouth of the river was wide, with a shallow bar, over which at times the waves dashed furiously. These bars are occasioned by the action of the wind

against the natural course of the river, causing the sediment to be deposited at their entrances instead of being carried out into the deeper parts of the sea. When the wind blows strongly—and it generally blows in one direction—the water, struggling to ooze forth, causes a terrible wave, which is by sailors technically called a "bore."

It was necessary for me to fit out my boat, provision it, and then to select a calm day for my departure. But even with a stiff breeze, the sea here was scarcely ruffled. The spot was not one I should have selected as a residence, but it did very well for a port. Broad mudbanks extended on either side when the tide was low, while birds and reptiles covered its banks. There were alligators, too. Indeed, the number of these loathsome brutes was very great, either swimming, or lying sprawling on the mud in wait for their prey.

My camp was on a rising knoll, whence I looked out upon the distant and promised land, which loomed gray and indistinct in the distance. Here my poles were erected, and a bush hut hastily constructed for the night. Here I sat after supper, gazing out at the scene before me, on the soft, unruffled sea, on the wild and furious bore, on the flat sea-coast, on the distant hills; until slowly the setting sun tinged their peaks with rosy and purple tints, when they gradually sunk into darkness as the evening mists gathered strength on the seaward edge of the jungle-like prairie, and moved by the evening breeze, sailed along like huge phantoms. Then came night itself, with its dew-laden atmosphere—against which I had guarded by means of my hut—and soon a starlit sky.

And then began the busy hum which is ever attendant on tropical nights, when the insects and monkeys, and other restless beasts, come forth in search of prey. But, guarded by my dogs, my gun near at hand, and my fire blazing cheerily, I cared not, but slept soundly through the long watches of the night.

Up at dawn of day, with a stiff squall just ending. While getting my breakfast and loading my patient cattle, I noticed how the gust seemed to have cleared the atmosphere. The distant island seemed nearer, every thing appeared to have fresh life, the very sea glittered in the sunlight with a brighter and a deeper blue, and the forest-clad slopes of this land looked more gorgeous, as they sparkled in the sun's rays, in all their varied panoply of gold and green. The whole scene was as of a "summer isle of Eden lying in dark purple spheres of sea."

Away with all speed to the cave, where necessarily two days were spent in final preparations. My provender consisted of one rum-keg of water, six gourds and calabashes ditto, one gourd of rum and water, one ditto of brandy neat; a fair supply of tobacco and sundry pipes. Then came one keg of half-salted pork raw, two joints of ditto roasted, much jerked or dried meat, some carrots, turnips, yams and cocoanuts; also a small quantity of corn, with two guns, a powder-horn and some bullets. In addition to the clothing that I wore, a number of furs were taken down to the beach, where my store was established.

The mast, sail, oars and rudder, were next transported, with due care, to the water's edge. A rough hut was erected over them, and then, with an ample supply of provender and bones, two dogs were tied up to guard them. My gazelle valley was visited the first day, and the gazelles driven into the pen, with a quantity of green meat. This done, on my return I was able to notice with pleasure the rich grass that was everywhere covering the valley, and which had hitherto kept these little creatures from attacking my cocoa palms, which were rising in a most astounding manner.

I killed two pigs, these animals breeding very fast, which I placed in an out-of-the-way place, for my dogs to find in case they were unsuccessful in hunting. A few additional scarecrows, in the shape of a stuffed monkey or so, were added to my plantation, and then, having acted like a prudent man, I thought it was time that I should give way to my feelings, and start on my voyage of discovery.

This time I took my solitary way toward the spot where lay my bark canoe. I had to bring the precious treasure down the river, and wanted no animals with me.

Besides, I wanted to be alone, to dance, to jump, to expand my chest, to breathe freely, as the thought filled my soul of what might be the ultimate result of my voyage. Mine was not hope—that told me no flattering tale. It was a certainty. Methought I saw her, as I walked, already my companion in this new garden of Eden.

My way lay through dense forests, open glades, across streams; and, as I was on foot, the way was long, so that it was evening before the camp was reached; and the thousand stars that strewed the sky peered knowingly down upon me, through openings in the forest, and the tall trees waved their sable plumes over my head, and the firefly and other luminous insects lit up, first one tree then the other, as if sparks of liquid gold were being emitted from the rustling and trembling leaves.

But my boat was safe, and I lay down that night within it, with rare satisfaction, wrapped in a huge rug, made from two lion-skins, sewn together. I had made no fire. My surprise may be conceived, when, toward dawn, I discovered how cold it

could be at so short a distance from the equator. I found, however, that the night-dew struck a chill to my very bones, so that when I crawled on shore, to illuminate the scene, my limbs were quite stiff.

A roaring fire I made of many a huge bough and many a branch, with chips that had been left, and Spanish moss, soon relieved me, and I returned to my couch, drawing it close in shore with something of a feeling of satisfaction. But sleep not being so easily wooed as I could wish, I was again on foot, and partaking of a hearty breakfast; after which I hastened to make up my fire cheerily, and then proceeded to cut down the pole which was to serve me to guide my boat down the river.

A long and straight one being found, it was cut down, its branches lopped, and the whole ready for use in little more than an hour. Then my canoe was entered, and one thrust of the pole sent it gliding gracefully and swiftly into the clear open water.

Above the dock where she had lain was an open lake-like space, where it took my fancy to give her a trial, for which purpose the pole was rigged up for a mast, and my lion-skin hooked on for a sail. A stout bough of a tree served for a temporary rudder or scull.

She behaved beautifully. But before I give any account of the Stormy Petrel, as my canoe was christened, let me make one remark.

I left a roaring fire on the beach, close to a large tree, which was thickly overgrown by creeping plants and Spanish moss, that hung down in graceful festoons to within a few feet of the fire.

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OUR FIRST AND LAST KISS.

BY JOE JOE, JR.

A lip a saint might stumble for
From the high place where he reposes,
Impassioned with a perfect grace,
And dewy with the death of roses—
Did so much hold the gift of bliss,
That as it turned in maiden seeming,
And touched on mine in willing trust,
Set all my soul forever dreaming.
Thrilling along the lines of sense
A message that will be immortal,
And thrilling, long delayed that lip,
Which is her spirit's guarded portal.
And I may never kiss again,
That one no more shall need renewal:
The first, the last, for her, for me,
It burns without the added fuel.
And oh to feel through years that pass,
In cold calamitous succession,
The memory of that kiss is more
Than amulet of rare possession.

The Red-skin's Request.

BY CAPT. CHARLES HOWARD.

"PAUL THORNTON must have been crazy when he left the city, to build such a house in this wild country," the hunters in the western wilds would mutter when they gazed upon an imposing residence on a hill surrounded by forests, inhabited by wild beasts and treacherous Indians.

White men seldom visited the mansion of their adventurous brother, though under its roof they were sumptuously entertained, and to them was told the reason why he had shut himself out from the world, as it were, and dwelt so far from the boundary of civilization.

Paul Thornton was about fifty years of age, though his snow-white locks caused him to look twenty-five years older. From boyhood until three years prior to the opening of our story he had lived in a populous eastern city, and celebrated his twenty-first birthday by marrying the only daughter of a prominent citizen and railroad king. Two children, in due time, were born, and with pride the parents saw them grow into noble manhood and womanhood.

But Morgan, whom they regarded as the staff for their declining years, was doomed to whiten their heads with untimely frosts, and make their lives an almost rayless existence. He happened one day to encounter a noted gambler, who at once marked him for a victim. He placed the damning bowl of intoxication to Morgan's lips, and with devilish joy saw him drink the very dregs. From that unguarded moment the descent of the hill of ruin was not difficult, and night after night found the rich merchant's son at the gambling-table.

The gold given him by his indulgent father was swept into the pockets of unprincipled men, and one night they brought him to his home a corpse.

"He accidentally discharged his revolver," said one of the gamblers, addressing the grief-stricken father.

For a while Paul Thornton believed this explanation; but the terrible truth burst upon him and sent him reeling to the earth. His son had committed suicide in a well-known gambling-hell. This terrible blow threw him into a fever, and for weeks he raved about his darling, who, in Greenwood, occupied the suicide's grave.

When he was well again, he determined to depart from the city in which had been wrecked his brightest hopes, and pass the remainder of his days in the far wild West. His wife and daughter were as eager to go as he, and one day they took their departure. Arrived in the West, Paul Thornton purchased a spot of ground from the red-men, who seemed peacefully disposed, and upon the hill in the center of his purchase he caused a mansion to be erected.

As the months of the four seasons passed, the Thorntons learned to love their secluded life, and, visited now and then by white hunters, and quite often by Indians, many hours were spent in which they forgot the tragic death of the loved one.

Among the hunters whom curiosity led to the seclusion of the door was a young Ohioan named Chester White. Tall, comely, and of gentlemanly address, he became a favorite at the mansion; and so pleased did Thornton become with the young man that he invited him to make his house his home.

Perhaps the bright eyes of Celeste influenced the young hunter's choice, for he quickly promised to tarry, and contribute his mite to cheer the lives of the sorrowing Thorntons. Chester, though quite a youth, was no mean hunter, and he and Paul Thornton chased the wild animals through the woods and over the plains until wearied with the sport.

The moonlight strolls of Celeste and Chester fostered a holy love, and by and by they were betrothed.

One day Chester left the western mansion, from which he expected to be absent a week. He intended to go to Fort Laramie, there to purchase some coveted articles for his soon-to-be bride. The journey promised to be a long and perilous one, and a young Indian accompanied him in the capacity of guide.

The evening succeeding Chester's departure was very beautiful, and Celeste strolled down to the edge of the timber to gather some of the flowers, which grew spontaneously and laden the air with a delightful perfume. After gathering many of the beautiful and delicate blossoms, she strolled into the wood, when she suddenly became bewildered amid the rapidly gathering shades of night.

Deeper and deeper into the dense timber went the poor girl, until wearied she sunk down at the foot of a tree, where, after committing herself to the keeping of the all-seeing eye, she fell asleep.

Yes, gentle reader, in that wild wood, the abode of the panther, the fox and the terrible wolf, poor, lost Celeste slumbered, and dreamed of being in her cosy little chamber. Alarmed at her absence, her parents were searching for her, and after shouting her loved name, and firing his rifle to guide her footsteps to him, Paul Thornton returned to comfort his tearful, fearful wife.

As the night wore on, the moon peeped over the eastern tree-tops, and her soft light shimmering down through the leafy boughs, fell gently upon the lost child. Still she slumbered on, with the gathered flowers for a pillow and the ground for a couch.

Suddenly throughout the wood resounded the heart-chilling howl of the gaunt western wolf, and it was almost immediately followed by the cry of the panther. Then the

owl and the fox joined the choir, and the forest seemed alive with wild animals.

But amid these dangers the maiden slept, while not an eye in her father's house was closed for a single moment. Presently the boughs above her bent beneath some living weight, and a huge panther looked down upon her. He lashed the branches with his tail, and displayed two rows of terrible teeth.

Moments flitted by, but still the beautiful animal remained upon the limb, looking down upon his lovely victim. He seemed in no great hurry to leap upon her, for was she not already in his power?

So deeply was the panther lost in contemplation that he did not hear the approach of moccasined feet, nor see the red hands that pointed the deadly rifle at his head. Noiselessly a savage chief had followed the animal from tree to tree, little suspecting the cause of his nocturnal prowling. A strange light beamed in the Indian's eyes when he noticed Celeste at the foot of the tree. His frame was visibly agitated, and he did not raise his rifle until he was wholly calm.

At last the panther prepared for the fatal spring. He crouched lower and lashed the branches with fearful fury. Then the red-man glanced along his shining rifle-barrel, and a sharp report rung through the woods.

With an almost human cry the king of our western forests rolled from the limb. He alighted on his feet, and with another cry of pain, faced the Indian. In the dim light the chief's aim had not been true, and the shot, which tore away a portion of the animal's cheek, seemed but to madden him. With the traditional bravery of his race the savage did not shun the encounter. He acted upon the offensive, desiring to bring the conflict to a speedy termination. He drew his hunting-knife and sprang upon the panther, which met him half-way.

The infuriated beast leaped upon his antagonist, and buried his teeth in the blanket, which protected his arm. The next moment the hunting-knife disappeared beneath the spotted skin; and tearing his foe loose, the Indian dashed him against a tree, at the foot of which he sunk in the quiverings of death.

The report of the rifle awakened Celeste, but she did not fully comprehend her peril until she was saved.

"The panther is dead," said the Indian, as he turned from his lifeless foe. "Little did Manomah think that the daughter of the pale-face was sleeping unguarded in the great wood."

"Yes; I am lost, Manomah," said Celeste,



THE RED-SKIN'S REQUEST.

who recognized the chief, for she had encountered him quite often at her father's mansion. "I strolled into the wood after flowers, got bewildered, and, completely wearied out, fell asleep where you found me."

"Manomah is glad that he saved the beautiful lily of the hill," returned the chief. "He will conduct her to her father's wigwam, where there are no prowling panthers."

"Father will reward you, noble Manomah," cried Celeste, "and there is another who will remember your noble deed."

She thought of her lover.

The chief did not reply; but took her hand and led her from the wood.

In due time they paused at the door of the mansion, and in response to Celeste's rap, Paul Thornton opened it to clasp his daughter to his heart.

"Manomah has restored the young bird to the nest," said the Indian. "He is happy. Now he will return and skin the panther."

Before Paul could stretch forth his hand to retain his child's preserver, he was flying down the walk, and soon disappeared beyond the ledge.

Celeste's adventures brought on a fever and she was very ill.

One day a young Indian came to the home of the Thorntons, and Paul dispatched him to his people to summon Manomah to his house. He wanted to reward the chief for saving Celeste's precious life.

Obedient to his summons the Indian came, with his firm step and noble mien. The grateful parents received him in the parlor, and loaded him with thanks.

Paul proffered him his gold-mounted rifle, but Manomah haughtily refused it.

"Manomah has a rifle; he can not use two," he said.

Then Mrs. Thornton took the diamond necklace from her neck and held it out to the chief.

"Let Manomah take these shining gems, though they be a small reward for his noble action," said the wife and mother.

"Let the wife of the pale-face keep them," he said, stretching forth his hand. "Manomah has no square."

"If Manomah will not have a rifle nor a string of diamonds, what will he have?" asked Paul, thinking that, perhaps, the chief coveted some particular thing.

Proudly Manomah drew himself to his full height, and, looking at Paul, spoke slowly:

"Manomah has said that he has no square. He has spoken truly. Long has he loved the peerless daughter of the pale-face, and if

her parents give her to him to love till he goes to the lodge of the Great Spirit, he will be happy."

Husband and wife could not but be surprised at this unexpected declaration of love, and it was some minutes before Paul could speak. He found that his reply would fire the indignation of the chief.

"The daughter of the pale-face is his no longer, Manomah. She is the promised bride of a white hunter."

The chief's head dropped upon his broad bosom, and silence filled the room.

"Then Manomah will go," he said, at last. "Where is the white lily?"

"She is sleeping."

"Let Manomah look upon her face before he goes."

The voice of the chief was sad.

Paul stepped across the room, opened a door that led into Celeste's chamber, and beckoned Manomah to his side.

For several minutes the chief gazed upon the beautiful sleeper, and then said, as he stepped back with one lingering look:

"Tell her when she opens her eyes, that Manomah loved her. He will never forget her, the beautiful white lily. May she be happy with her pale-face lover. Manomah will wait for her in the warm lodge of the Manitou."

Sadly and slowly, with a crushed heart, the truly noble red-man turned away and left the house.

Two days later he was found on the bank of a stream, dead! In his hands was found the crushed bouquet upon which Celeste had pillowed the night she was lost in the wood. He had taken his own life, preferring to die rather than live and see the woman he loved the bride of another.

Noble Manomah! *Requiescat in pace.*

Camp-Fire Yarns.

A Cool Hand.

"Now, lads," old Pete remarked, "don't get skeered at what's mebbe nothin' but a painter. I don't believe 'tar' Injuns, 'cos our fire ain't ter be seen from the outside. Look to yer rifles and lie down. Billy'll let us know what it ar' pretty soon."

We preserved a dead silence, and obeyed his orders, all but the Englishman.

That individual preserved his seat upon his saddle with the most perfect coolness,

"It's the buffaloes moving—is it not?" asked Charley.

"I b'lieve you've hit it, lad, although an old mountain-man like me *was* puzzled."

At this moment Bill Wilson came in in some excitement.

"We'll have to saddle up durned quick," said he; "git your traps up, and pack yer saddles."

"But how about *him*?" asked Pete, pointing to the sleeping baronet.

"Oh, he's got to wake up. I *kin* do a great deal, but I'm durned if I'm a-goin' to try and stop a drove of bufflers."

"Who'll wake him?"

"I will." And the hunter proceeded to stir up Sir John, not too gently, with the butt of his rifle.

"Wake up, Sir John!" he cried; "we've got to *git out* of this ere. The fellers is almost saddled."

The sleepy Englishman rubbed his eyes.

"What's the matter, Wilson?"

"Only that about a hundred million bufflers's a-comin' right over here, and if you stay there much longer you'll be squashed flatter nora pancake."

"But—ah—Mr. Wilson—you engaged—ah—"

"I never engaged to *drive back* a herd of bufflers, Sir John," returned the other, decisively. "I ain't got time ter talk, for I must saddle up."

And Wilson turned away to initiate our example.

The dull, distant sound was now becoming plain, and we hurried up our task, expecting momentarily to have it cut short.

The English baronet slowly rose, and prepared to depart.

"I must say—ah—Mr. Wilson—ah—that I consider—ah—this waking a fellow up—ah—at this—ah—time of night—ah—is durned uncomfortable," said he, slowly, but folding his blankets as he spoke, dexterously enough, and strapping them to his saddle.

Indeed no man, not a maniac, could have listened to the dull thunder of feet that was now rapidly advancing, and not have felt convinced that flight was a matter of necessity.

Already we could see the moving mass looming through the night, and I judge they could not have been more than a hundred yards off.

But in such immense herds, the bison of North America, are by no means so rapid that they can not be easily escaped, and before long, as we trotted away, we had left the noise behind us, and what remained was

Still we gained on the terrible herd.

"We'll hev to git *round* the *butte*, lads," remarked Pete Wilkins, at last. "The herd will part on each side, and you'll find a quiet place *ther*."

We followed his advice, and in a few moments more had rounded the end of the *butte*, and were pulling up our panting horses in comparative safety.

Then we dismounted, and led them up the side of the mound, which here sloped more gently down, although on the other three sides it was nearly perpendicular.

Then we were safe at last, and could look down at the passing herd without alarm.

Sir John Brown was the first of our party to compose himself to sleep, observing to Wilson:

"I suppose—ah—Wilson—ah—you can now attend to all your business for the night."

"Guess so, Sir John," answered the hunter.

"Then I must really make up my night's rest," returned the baronet, unsaddling as he spoke, and spreading out his couch on the top of the mound, in the most careful manner.

The rest of us were not very sorry to follow his example, for we were tired out; and before long the dull thunder of the passing thousands of animals below only mingled with our dreams.

I awoke just as the first red streaks were showing in the east, and every thing still remained the same.

The buffaloes were still passing, a countless throng, and my companions were slowly waking up one by one.

The top of the mound, which was evidently one of those mysterious relics of Indian civilization sometimes met with in North America, was covered with grass, and we had turned our animals loose to browse, knowing that they could not stray from us.

Bill Wilson walked to the edge to reconnoiter.

We saw the burly hunter scan the plain in all directions from under his hand.

The sun was just rising, and lit up his tangled hair and huge bushy black beard, like an aureole, as he stood there sharply outlined against the sky.

Suddenly we saw him start and peer eagerly toward the north, while he seemed to stiffen into a crouching statue.

Beat Time's Notes.

MR. LO, THE POOR INDIAN.

WHEN I last met Mr. Lo, the immortal, and everlastingly poor Indian, the infirmities of age were a heavy burden on the old man's shoulders, but he was still a prominent feature in the scenery of the West. He sat down on my hat, and gave me at my request the history of his life. He told all the facts, speaking in his own tongue, but owing perhaps to a defect in my hearing, or something else, I understood very little of what he told me, but I knew what he meant very well, and so I translated it according to my own ideas of it.

Mr. Lo was born many thousand of moons, and a few stars, before this country was discovered or the Plymouth was rocked in the Mayflower. At his earliest age he was a papoose, bound to a little piece of board, which made it inconvenient for him to be spanked with the old lady's slipper, but allowed him to sleep leaning against the fence.

His mother used to fasten him on the limb of a tree and sing:

Rocky by, baby,
On the tree top,
When the wind, etc.

And his father used to go hunting to get a rabbit-skin to wrap him in. From a papoose he grew to be a boy, and his father, not caring to send him to college, gave him a bow and arrow, and often sent him out in the rain or snow to exercise; thus he learned the element-ary principles of his education. He wasn't like some marksmen who would miss a dog, even if they would put the muzzle of the gun inside its mouth, but he could take the nail off a little grasshopper's middle toe around the corner.

He wore a little hunting-shirt, so called because he was always hunting for it, buckskin leggings, and moccasins of the same cloth.

He was very successful in the chase; but in one chase he was unlucky, for once he took his father's violin-strings to put on his bow, and then took the fiddle-bow for an arrow. His father finding it out thought he had too many bows to his string, and gave him chase, and catching the small American, taught the young idea how to shoot with the other end of a bow. He *loved* to his destiny, and was pleased that he had had an arrow escape.

He was great for games, and it may be chronicled that he invariably played *lon*.

In his young days he never knew any of the delights of the Fourth of July, as my little readers will remember there was no fourth of July until 1776; neither did he ever have the pleasure of lying bunches of fire-crackers to dogs' tails, or of scattering torpedoes over the kitchen floor for Biddy to walk on.

However, like you, he frequently got the birchen rod, and to commemorate that article, his father made him a little boat of birchen bark, and after that he peddled his own canoe.

His eye was so keen that he could tell when the shadow of a bird went over the ground half an hour afterward.

He had a splendid voice for whooping, from the fact that he once had the whooping cough. Indeed, his whoop frightened his enemies more than his arms, and once going into battle without his paint, which was as necessary as the powder nowadays, he displeased his ancient gods so much that they doomed him to live until the last Indian forever ceased to scalp United States' regiments. It is thought by some computers that he will never die.

P. S. I read this account to him in Dutch, and I think he thought it was true because he didn't kick against it—though he tried to kick against me.

An alligator has a good mouth for almost every thing, from a cart-load of furniture down to a sardine; indeed, it looks just like two cross-cut saws with an overgrown handle for a body. He is a half-brother to Crock, I mean old crocodile, and wears scales on his back which will weigh a great deal. They frequently go to blacksmiths near by to get their scales re-riveted on. They are used in New Orleans to tow the ships up and down the river. You can see one at the Museum; the last meal he ever ate was straw, and it has been remarked that he was pretty well stuffed.

BEAT TIME.